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CHAPTER I.—OF THE HALL OF SULNEY AND HOW SIR YWAIN LEFT IT.

Sir Ywain[1] sat in the hall of Sulney and did justice upon wrong-doers. And one man had gathered sticks where he ought not, and this was for the twentieth time; and another had snared a rabbit of his lord's, and this was for the fortieth time; and another had beaten his wife, and she him, and this was for the hundredth time: so that Sir Ywain was weary of the sight of them. Moreover, his steward stood beside him, and put him in remembrance of all the misery that had else been forgotten.

And in the middle of his judging there was brought into the hall a child that had been found in the road, a boy of seven years as it seemed: and he was dressed in fine hunting green, but not after the fashion of that day or country. Also when they spoke to him he answered becomingly, but in a speech that no one could understand.

So Sir Ywain had him set by the table at his own side, and now and again as he judged those wrong-doers, he cast a look upon the child. And always the child looked back at him with bright eyes, and even when there was no looking between them, he listened to what was being said, and smiled as though that which was weariness to others was to him something new and joyful. But as the hour passed, Sir Ywain felt his

[1] Ywain = Ewain or Ewan.

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mind slacken more and more, and whenever he saw the boy smiling, his own heart became heavier and heavier between his shoulders, and his life and the life of his people seemed like a high-road, dusty and endless, that might never be left without trespassing. And though he would not break off from his judging, yet he groaned over the offenders instead of rebuking them; and when he should have punished, he dismissed them upon their promise, so that his steward was mortified, and the guilty could not believe their ears.

Then when all was said and done the hall was cleared, and Sir Ywain was left alone with the boy.

But the steward, looking slyly back through the hinges of the door, saw that his lord and the child were speaking together; and he perceived that they understood one another well enough, though how this could have come about he was unable to guess, having himself heard the boy answering to all questions in none but an outlandish tongue.

Then he saw Sir Ywain rise up, and suddenly he was aware that his lord was calling for him loudly and with a hearty voice, as he would call for him long since, when they were at the wars together. And when he went in, Sir Ywain bade him summon all the household.

Now when the household were come into the hall they stood at a little distance from the dais, in the order of their service, and Sir Ywain stood above them in front of the high table. And beside him was the boy, and before him was his own brother, who was now an esquire grown, with hawk on wrist.

Then Sir Ywain bade his brother kneel down, and there he made him knight, taking his sword from him and laying it on his shoulder, and afterwards belting it again round his body. And he took the keys from his own girdle and the gold spurs from his own feet, and said aloud: "I call you all to witness that as I have done off my knighthood and the Honour of Sulney, and given them to this my brother Sir Turquin, so also by these tokens do I deliver unto him the quiet possession of my house and goods and the seisin of all my lands, to hold unto him and his heirs for ever, by the service due and accustomed for the same. And henceforth I go free."

Then his brother, who was both glad and sorry, and moreover was still in doubt how this might end, stood holding the keys and the spurs, and looking at him without a word. And he looked also at the child, and he saw that for all the difference in their years, the eyes of Sir Ywain had become like the boy's eyes: and as he looked his heart became heavy, and for a moment he envied his brother and feared for himself. But in his fear he moved his hands, and the keys clanked and the spurs clinked together, and his heart leaped up again for joy of his possessions.

And all this Ywain saw as

it were from a great distance, and he smiled, and forgot it again instantly. And the boy took his hand, and they went down the hall together.

And when they came to the door to pass out, the steward got before them and bowed as he was used to do, and spoke very gravely to Sir Ywain, reminding him that this same afternoon had been appointed among the lords, his neighbours, for the witnessing of certain charters.

But Ywain and the boy looked at one another and laughed, and the steward saw that they laughed at the lords and at him and at the very greatness of the business: and he was enraged, and turned away and went to his new master.

Then Sir Turquin came hastily after them, and he laid his hand upon his brother's arm and bent his head a little, and said to him so that none else should hear, "What is this that you are doing; for no man leaves all that he has, and departs suddenly, taking nothing with him." But those two went from him without answering, and they passed, as it seemed, very swiftly along the road under the woodside, and were hidden from him. And again, as he stood still watching, he saw them going swiftly above the wood where there was no path, but only the bare wold before them.

CHAPTER II.—HOW SIR YWAIN SAW HIS OWN FACE THE FIRST TIME.

Now the truth is that when Ywain turned his back on his old life and the snug lordship that was his, he had no thought of what was to be the way of his wandering, nor did he so much as know by which of the world's four roads he would begin his journey. But he climbed upon the open wold as if all his pleasure was to climb and to strike his feet firmly and to breathe deep: and the boy went by his side in like manner, and they spoke no word.

But when they were come to the height of the slope, Ywain turned and looked down upon the homestead of Sulney, and he saw it small and clear under the midday sun, as like as may be to a toy that a child would play with: and there was no man moving about it, but only the white pigeons flying this way and that upon the roofs. And it was lovely to him, for he saw it as a time that is past.

Then he looked a little farther, and saw the broad road, and dust kindling along it like smoke, and in the dust a great company riding: and they rode in order by two and by two, and their jogging was heavy, and Ywain remembered that these were the lords who had appointed to do business with him.

And because of them the place was no longer lovely to him, and he turned away and ran quickly over the ridge, and when he could see them no

more he laughed: and the boy also ran and laughed, and their laughter was as though they were both truants from school, escaping narrowly with fear and joy together. And on the other side of the ridge they cast themselves down upon the grass, and among the grass were thistles, and the thistles pricked them sharply, and they rolled and were pricked again, and laughed again and yet again.

Then they set their shoulders against a bank, and sat still, looking to the country that was before them. On the one hand lay the sea near by, and upon it white sails of ships that were sailing marvellously, for though they were upon the sea yet they sailed, as it seemed, high above the land. And on the other side lay a thick wood that hid all the far country, and before the wood was a village and a tower. And Ywain knew that village well enough, cot and lot, barn and balk, and he thought not at all of the village, but only of the wood and the great depth of it and of what might be beyond. And so thinking he fell asleep.

But when he awoke the sun was westering, and he looked again upon the village and saw it as though it were strange to him, and he could not remember even the name of it. Then he stood up, and turned towards the place beside him where the boy had been: and as he looked he was astonished, for the boy was there still, sleeping as himself had slept, but his face was like the face of an old man, and the lines upon it were countless, like bird marks on the river-sand.

So Ywain stood staring for a while, and he said to himself, "Now I know by the trouble in my head that either I have lost my wits, as a man beat down in battle, or else in all this there is a meaning that I have known and forgotten, for it seems to be both reasonable and impossible." Then he touched the boy's hand and awoke him, and when he saw his eyes again, he asked him, "Who, then, are you?"

And the boy said, "Answer me first the same question."

But Ywain would not, for he said, "Why must I answer first?"

And the boy said, "Let be, then; for you know already what you would answer, and there is but one and the same answer to your question and to mine."

Then Ywain looked no more into the boy's eyes but upon the ground, and bewilderment came upon him again, for he said in his heart, "This that he says is madness, and yet I seem to know that it is true." And when he lifted his head again he said to the boy, "How can a man speak with himself face to face: and how can I, that am neither, be both an old man and a boy?"

But the boy answered him, "Is not every man that which was and that which shall be: and in all the days of his life shall he not once or twice see the face of his desire?" And

as he spoke Ywain heard him plainly, but now he saw him not so plainly, though he stood looking down upon him in the same place: and he said quickly, "Tell me this, then: what is my desire?"

And he heard again the answer as one that hears a voice through the mist: but the words were in an unknown tongue. And he peered down, and stooped, and where the boy had been there was but the long grass and the thistles: and when he rose up again he saw the hillside clear before him, and the sun was low and the edges of the bents were glistening, and nothing moved among them but the wind of sunset.

CHAPTER III.—HOW IT FORTUNED TO YWAIN TO FIND A STAFF IN THE PLACE OF HIS SWORD.

Then Ywain turned his face towards the village, and went down the hill: and he went with a good heart, for though the boy had left him, yet he hoped not to be long without him, and even now when he looked straight forward it seemed that he had the joy of his company and his laughter. But when he turned and looked beside him, there was but his own shadow; black it lay and long, and about the edges of it a brightness was shining. Then he remembered that the sun was low and night rising among the hollows, and he bethought him of his supper and sleep.

So he went quickly to the village, and passed through it and came to the farmer's house that lay beside the great wood: and the farmwife gave him welcome, as one that knew not who he was, but could well pitch her guess within a mile or so. And she whispered to her husband, but he was hard of hearing and full of slumber from the fields. So when Ywain had supped, they showed him where he should lie. And when he was come there he laid him down, and the day went from him in a moment and he knew no more whether he were alive or dead.

But very early in the morning he awoke, and he saw that over against his face as he lay abed there was a window in the wall. And the window was open, and there came through it a small sweet noise, for it was the time of sparrow chirp, which comes just before the rising of the sun. So he rose from his bed and went to the window and leaned with his arms upon the sill, watching for the day to turn from greyness to light.

And as he leaned and watched he heard a noise of talking in the house below, for the door was right there beneath him, and it stood open wide. Moreover, the talking was loud, for they that talked were the farmer and his wife, and she spoke loud because he was hard of hearing, and he

spoke yet louder because she was his wife, and he wished his saying to prevail over hers.

So she said in a high voice, "As surely as an egg is an egg, by the same token this is my lord of Sulney."

Then he spoke scornfully of her and her eggs, and he asked her for what reason of all the reasons on earth should such a one as my lord of Sulney come to sup in a farmstead that was none of his, and sleep in a vile bed, when he had better within a bare league.

And she answered quickly that though a thing were clean past a man's understanding, yet it might well happen so for all that: and further, she would have him to know that in her house were no vile beds, but such as were fit for any man to sleep in, and she cared not who he might be.

And at that he growled a little, like a dog that is made to cease barking. Then he spoke to her again, in the manner of one who deals with a child, making a show of gentleness and mastery together. "See now," he said, "and I will give you three reasons why you have the wrong and I have the right of it. First then, this one that has had supper and sleeping-room of us is a young man, and quick to rise and to sit down, but my lord of Sulney is past his youth and waxing heavy. Secondly, this one came to us walking upon his own shanks, and that no lord would do that had the horses of Sulney, for I have seen them time and again, and in these parts there are none better. And beside these two reasons, there is a third that you might well have seen with your own eyes, for this man's cloak is the cloak of a pilgrim and not of a lord, and his hat and staff are such as none use but wayfarers. And if you will not believe me now, you may ask him for the truth of it yourself."

"That will I do," said the woman.

Then Ywain fell into a study, for he saw that in despite of all those reasons her mind was not changed, but that she would certainly ask the truth of him. And it seemed hard to him to know what the truth might be: for he remembered how he had put off the lordship that was his, but he could not tell how he had become young, nor how he had lost his sword and come by the hat and staff of his pilgrimage: so that he thought at one moment, "I am that lord," and at another, "I am not," and his life past seemed like a dream of the night.

And while he was still wondering he went down the steps, and in the room that was below he saw the farmwife with bread for him to break his fast, and the man by the door; and against the wall he saw his hat and staff. And as he ate, the woman said to him, "Look you, sir, we are not used to keep guests that are unknown to us. But we knew you, that you are my lord of Sulney."

Then Ywain said, "I am not," and immediately the

farmer slapped his hand upon his thigh and shouted at his wife. But Ywain saw the woman look at him, and he looked at her, and she smiled to him as to one that was bidding her keep a thing secret. And she said to her husband, "There is no need for you to shout: for an apple may have a red side and a green, and yet it is an apple, to him that hath understanding."

Then Ywain gave her thanks, and took his leave of them both: and he went out into the sunlight, and followed the path into the high wood. But he saw nothing of his way as he went, for all his thought was upon that answer which he had given, whereby he had answered others, but in no wise answered himself.

CHAPTER IV.—HOW YWAIN CAME TO AN HERMITAGE IN A WOOD.

So Ywain marched alone in the high wood, and for a time he saw no more the sun, nor the light of the sun, for the wood was of pines and they were marvellous thick above his head. But the stems were far enough apart and the track went this way and that among them, and whiles it turned aside and whiles it forked, and whiles it was no track at all. But Ywain went always right forward and would not stay, nor leave following his own thought. And as he went it came again into his mind that he was a new man, for though he was still amazed with questions yet he carried neither forethought nor repentance, and he marched to a song that was in his ears. And in his marching there came to him the remembrance of the child that had led him forth, and though he knew surely that he was now alone, yet, by the imagination of his heart, he could well see the child dancing before him upon the path of the forest.

And at last when he had gone a long way and could by no means tell how long, on a sudden he looked far before him and saw the ground all fresh with grass, and no more pine-needles upon it but sunlight and shadow. And he went quickly forward and came out from the dark wood and stood in an open grove that was hoar with silver-birches: and beyond the grove was a stream that ran burbling, and beyond the stream was a bank with great beeches upon it. So for delight of that place he turned and left following the path, and went along between the beech-roots and the stream.

And as he went the bank upon the right hand was ever higher and steeper, until there were no more beeches upon it, but by the stream was a bare lawn between this wood and that, and a little cliff thereby, as sharp as a cliff of the sea. Now the cliff was of red sand, and the face of it was carven curiously: for in it were two

steps and a doorway, as it were the doorway of a church, and two windows of like fashion with a little mullion to each: so that Ywain knew it for an hermitage. And he sat down to look upon it, stepping back within the shadow of the beech-trees: and when he looked, it did him great good to see and to think upon it, for the house was small and secret, and though the carven work of it was but plain, yet it well showed the pleasure of him that had worked at it.

Then the hermit came out from within, and when he saw him Ywain kept close to watch what he would do, for he knew not the manner of hermits, nor how they live all their life-days, seeing that they have time before them like new-fallen snow, without fence or foot-mark.

Now the hermit had bread in his hand, and Ywain hungered at the sight of it, for he had had none since the morning was early and it was now late, and this he knew by the hermit's shadow, for it lay small and squat about his feet. Nevertheless he would not move, but kept still where he sat, for his desire to see was greater than his desire to eat, and he thought moreover that he might yet come to the eating after the seeing.

So he looked and saw as he desired: for the hermit broke the bread and rubbed it in his hand and threw the crumbs abroad upon the lawn: and instantly there came upon the place a dozen of small fowls, such as dunnocks and finches, and they hovered and hopped after the bread as long as he would throw it. And some part of it he would not throw, but he walked away from the birds and came to the stream and held out his hand above a little pool where the water ran curdling. And Ywain knew that he was giving the remnant to the fish, and that they were by likelihood trout that came for it, for where a crumb fell upon the pool there he saw the water broken, and at some times there was no splashing but only a ridge that ran swiftly upon the face of the pool.

Then when all was finished the hermit stood looking upon the water as one that loved the sound of it and had no need to be elsewhere. But the sun was strong upon his head, and Ywain saw how he drew his hood around his neck where it was bare at the nape, and so went back to the house in the rock. And as he entered in at the doorway the shadow was cool and dark upon him, and then he was gone as a fox goes into his earth.

But Ywain mused yet a little while longer, and all that he had seen seemed strange and very good to him, like the tales of the elves and pixies, of whom there is nothing told that will not please young children, because they also have their dealing with the little things of the earth, and are of no account with grown men. And he wondered if this might be the end of his desire, to live secretly and far off from men, having his converse only with the creatures of the greenwood.

CHAPTER V.—OF THE HERMIT AND OF HIS DEALING WITH YWAIN.

So within a while he got upon his feet and came to the door in the rock and called to the hermit; and the hermit came from within and stood shading his eyes with his hand, and asked him the reason of his calling. And Ywain answered him courteously, making as though to take his hat from off his head in sign of reverence: and the hermit lifted his eyes in the same moment and saw that the hat was the hat of a pilgrim, and yet of no accustomed pilgrim, for there were upon it neither shells nor images. Also he saw that Ywain's cloak was not thread-worn nor his shoes broken. And his face he could not well see for the brightness of the sunlight, but by his voice he might perceive him to be young and gentle, and none of the wandering rogues of whom all hermits dwell in dread. Then he brought him into his cave, that was as like a house as a cave may be, and he made him sit by a table, and gave him to eat and to drink.

And when Ywain had well eaten and drunk the hermit asked him concerning the way by which he had come, and the way by which he would go forth again: but he would not ask of his name, nor in what house he was born, nor even of his pilgrimage, for he also was courteous, and his mind was to pleasure his guest and not himself only. Nevertheless he was not willing to lose the companionship that had fallen to him until he should have heard somewhat of the dealing of men, for it was long since he had had knowledge thereof by one of like breeding with himself. So he spoke to Ywain of to-morrow, and of certain things that he would show him, and Ywain heard him gladly enough, for his feet were now heavy with weariness and good eating. And the hermit knew this by the sound of his speech, and he laid him upon his own bed and bade him take his ease.

Now when Ywain awoke he looked first upon the wall of the chamber and saw that there was a glint of sunlight upon it high up, whereby he knew that the day was falling. Also he was aware that there was one watching him, and when he had turned his head he saw how it was the hermit who stood in the doorway of the chamber: and the man's face seemed to him wise and quiet, as of one that had many thoughts and mastery therewith.

So they two went to supper, and this was the first time that they had eaten together. And at one time they remembered this, and at another they forgot it: for they spoke not of their doing but chiefly of their deeming, and often they would be eager the one to put question to the other, and often they would know before question put how the answer would be.

Then at the last Ywain was minded to ask counsel of the hermit, and in one tale he told him all, to wit, how that in a day his life had changed, and how that he had left his own house and the house of his fathers, and gone out to seek his desire, and again how that he had as yet no certainty of what his desire might be. Only he told nothing of the boy that had come and led him away: but he put his own desire in place of the boy, for he was willing rather to be counted a fool than a teller of marvels. And he thought that his adventure might be judged as well by the part as by the whole, for that which he would hold back was in no wise the marrow of it.

But the hermit said, "Desire is a child: yet will he take a man by the hand and lead him away."

Then Ywain was astonished, for he said within himself, "How can this hermit have knowledge of the child, seeing that I told him nothing?"

Then the hermit said further, "This is the part of a man, to know whether his desire be a wise child or a wayward. For the wayward will swiftly take him a-wandering, and swiftly in his wandering will leave him: but the wise will never leave him utterly."

Then Ywain asked him, "By what reason may that be?" And the hermit said, "By nature: for every man is that which hath been and that which shall be."

Then Ywain was yet more astonished, and his mind swung backwards and he thought, "Certainly I must have told him, for these words are every one of them the words of the boy." And instantly his mind swung again and he thought, "But I told him not." And he looked at the hermit's face and saw it hardly, for the twilight was covering it from him by little and little: but he saw the two eyes of him and they were not fainter but clearer, and Ywain's heart lay open to them like water to the stars. And he said within himself, "The words that I told not, he perceived them with his eyes."

Then the hermit rose up softly and went out, and when he came again he brought heather and fern, and he made Ywain a bed beyond his own, and they slept before it was dark.

CHAPTER VI.—YET MORE OF THE HERMIT, AND OF A WORD THAT WAS IN YWAIN'S EARS.

In the morning when they had arisen they went out of the house and came to the stream, for the hermit said that they should bathe in it, and he showed Ywain a pool that was deep enough. Then they did off their clothes hastily and threw themselves into the water after the manner of otters, and at a stroke they came to the top of the pool. And there was a little waterfall there, and the stream of it carried them down, and they touched the stones and crept

out upon them. Then they took the water again more strongly and came right to the waterfall and stood beneath it, and it splashed upon their heads and divided the hair like a cold knife. And at that they laughed together and so threw themselves back and were carried down again, and they came quickly to their clothes, blowing with their breath and shivering. But when they had run to the house they were warm and fresh.

Then the hermit set two bowls of milk with bread upon the table. And Ywain was glad of the sight of that food, and he sat where the murmuring of the stream came in at the window, and a soft air with it, and the world was made new for him. But he ate and drank with few words, for he was thinking within himself how that to-morrow had come and he knew not yet whether to go or stay. And often in his thinking he looked at the hermit, and the hermit looked kindly back at him, and nodded: and it was as though he nodded to Ywain's thought, but he spoke nothing with his lips. Yet at one time there was a voice, and Ywain heard it plainly: and the voice said, "For delight men stay, but for desire they go forth." And he looked hard at the hermit, and the hermit nodded again to him, as though he also had heard that voice, and knew it to say truth: but he spoke nothing with his lips.

Then Ywain said aloud, "Surely I heard a voice and it was not your voice nor mine, yet it seemed to me that I heard it not in my imagination but in my ears."

And the hermit said, "I also heard it, and before this I have heard many such, and no great wonder; for in all solitude there will be voices, as in all still water there will be visions."

And as Ywain heard those words he believed them, and he thought on still water, but found none in his remembrance: only he saw before him the picture of the stream, wherein he had but now been bathing, and the course of it was all racing and burbling, and where it lay more still, even there froth turned and drew together upon the face of it. And he asked the hermit boldly, "Where then is the still water of your visions?"

And the hermit answered, "It is near at hand: but the looking is longer than the way thither."

CHAPTER VII.—HOW YWAIN LOOKED INTO THE WATER OF A WELL, AND OF THAT WHICH HE SAW THEREIN.

Then they rose up and went out, and the hermit showed Ywain a little path that went along under the cliff and so into the wood beyond: and thereby, he said, was the way to a dead thorn-tree that stood in a space alone, and under the thorn-tree was a well-spring, and from the well-spring came a runnel of bright water whereby it might surely be found.

Then he put a wheaten-cake into Ywain's hand and said to him, "Farewell now for to-day, and at supper-time come again with your visions, and we will talk of them together. But when you stand by the well-spring and look therein, then," said he, "be not weary of your looking, but return always and be always in hope until the sun go down. For the visions are not quickly to be seen, as the common sort suppose that they see all things which are before their faces: whereas they see, as it were, but the shadows upon the ground and not the life of those who cast them. But that which you seek to see is the dealing of spirits, and men come not thereto suddenly, but by long time and loneliness."

Then he returned from him, and Ywain took the path and went into the wood, and in no long space he saw a great thorn-tree before him, and it was all dead and without leaf or berry, and other trees there were none very near it, but only the cliff that bore hard upon it on the one side, whereby it leaned a little outwards. And beneath the spread of it Ywain saw a well-head made of stone from the cliff, and it was of the height of a man's thigh. Also there was a step or margin of stone under it, and the step and the well-head were both shapen with six sides, every side equal to every other, after the manner of the waxen chambers of bees. And when Ywain came nearer he saw that the spring rose in the well-head within four fingers of the brim, but it could not rise above the brim by reason of a little sluice below, that was made in the stone above the step, and a runnel came therefrom of bright water and went into the wood darkling.

Then he looked into the water of the spring, and it was deep and still, for the fountain was as great as the runnel and no more, so that there came no moving of the water that was above. But the shadow of the cliff lay yet upon the well-head, for the sun was not high, and by that reason the face of the water was like the face of a mirror, and all that Ywain could see therein was his own image, and with that the image of the thorn-tree, and no more could he see though he looked long and warily.

So for a while he ceased from looking, and he went into the wood beyond the well, and walked softly therein, for he meant to come again as the hermit had counselled him. And as he went he mused, and when he awoke out of his musing he perceived that the sun was now high above him. Right so he turned about and came quickly back to the thorn-tree, and looked again into the water; and where dimness had been there was sunlight, and the water was clear and thin, and in the depth of it were many lights both shining and shimmering, for some of them rested in their glowing, like embers, and some rose and curdled, like smoke of gold, and so passed and came again continually. But of visions Ywain could find none: only these lights could he see, and

else nothing. Then again he left looking in the water, and sat down under a green tree, for it was past noon and hotter than before: and he took his wheaten-cake that the hermit had given him and ate it sitting there. And as he ate he thought on these days that were hardly yet three days since he left his former life, and they seemed to him to be as it were three long years, that lay between him and the time that was before.

Then suddenly he perceived that with his thinking the heat of the day had gone over, and the sun was dipped into the trees of the wood behind him where he sat. And he looked again towards the well-head that stood there before him, and a light was upon the stone of it that was the last of the sunlight, and afterwards that light passed away and the stone was left dark. Then he knew that his time was come, and he leapt up and strode to the well and leaned over it. And at the first he looked and saw nothing, for a darkness seemed to rise and roll within it, like a cloud in storm: but after no long watching the darkness rolled away, and he saw clearly.

Now that which he saw was a marvel, for it was not water, though it lay within the well-head: nor was it sunlight, for the sun was now far down behind the wood. But it was by seeming a piece of that country, as it were between the night and the day: for there was a wood and a river with a high bank, and in the sky above there was neither sun nor moon, but one only star of bright silver. And as he looked the star faded, by reason that the sky was more light, and he saw that the river was wide and shallow, and over the width of it were stepping-stones, one beyond another in a line, like floats upon a fish-net. And out of the wood came a boy, and though his face was turned away, yet could Ywain tell without doubt that he was in all things like the boy that had been with him: and his heart beat and he strained in his watching as one that fears lest he be seen or heard. But the boy came to the stepping-stones and passed lightly over them, and began to go upon the bank. And as he went there came a bright light upon the topmost of the bank, and Ywain perceived that it was the light of sunrise, and it fell upon a banner that was there, with men about it in armour, and twice or thrice there came sudden glints upon the armour. And for all that they seemed far off and small, it was clear to be seen that they fought together in two companies. And the boy, when he had climbed the bank, came to one of the companies and entered into it, and Ywain saw him no more: but that company stayed not where they were, for they were hard pushed in the fighting, and gave ground by inch and by inch. And one man of them, that had no helmet upon him, came to the edge of the bank, with a horn in his right hand: and he set the horn to his mouth to blow it, and in that instant the darkness came

again, and Ywain saw nothing but only the water in the well, and the cloud that rolled within the water. And he started up, and fear and joy took him in the same blood-heat, and he turned and ran quickly by the path under the cliff.

CHAPTER VIII.—HOW THE HERMIT SET YWAIN ON HIS WAY AND OF TWO SECRETS THAT HE TOLD HIM.

Now it was the hour when the hermit would be going to supper, and thereupon came Ywain to the house. And while they sat eating and drinking Ywain told the hermit of that which he had seen: but he spoke warily, for he told him nothing of the boy.

And the hermit said, "The vision is yours and not mine: yet this much concerning it is in my head and not in yours. I tell you, therefore, the wood-side that was shown to you, and the stepping-stones, and the bank beyond the water, all these are of no solitary vision, but may be seen of any man that has a mind thereto."

Then said Ywain quickly, "That mind have I," and the hermit looked him in the face and nodded to him after his own fashion. Then he told him of the way to that place which he had seen: and as he spoke Ywain saw the way plainly, as it were before him, and the winding and the turns of it, and the stars above the trees, and the setting-place of the moon. And the hermit said how it was a nine hours' journey for a man like himself, that was now out of his youth and past hurrying.

And when he heard that, Ywain kept silence for a moment, and in the silence he made his reckoning, that it wanted even now but eight hours to sunrise. And thereupon he stood up suddenly upon his feet and stretched out his hand to bid the hermit farewell.

But the hermit left him there standing, and went to and fro and took bread from the table and put it in a wallet and brought it to Ywain, and he took also a hunting-knife from the wall behind the door, and a thong thereto, and gave it to him to belt about his middle. But Ywain laid it first upon the table, and drew the knife from out the sheath and cut off a silver button of his cloak. And the knife he returned into the sheath and left it lying: and the button he gave to the hermit in token of bargain and sale, lest in the time to come by the gift of a knife their friendship should be parted, as hath happened unto many and many. And then he belted on the knife without fear, and they two went swiftly from the house and came to the wood and entered into it.

Now the moon was high and bright, being near the full, and the light of her came softly between the trees and made clear the path. And Ywain and the hermit spoke little in their going, for all the need that they had of each

other: but their speech seemed to them as it were forbidden, by reason of the shadows. So they went dumbly for the most part, walking the one before the other and making great haste, and when a full hour was gone they came to an open heath that was beyond the wood. And the hermit stayed there and set him down upon the heather, and he said to Ywain that he could go with him no farther, for the moon was fast southing and he was an hour's journey from home. But this he said courteously, as one that spoke of necessity and against his own heart.

Then Ywain sat by him, and suddenly in his heart also there came division, with thoughts straining this way and that as two hounds that strain in the same leash. For though he was hot to follow his desire, yet he remembered the companionship of the hermit and the quiet of his dwelling; moreover, he saw the man there beside him and none to take his place. But again the remembrance of the boy drew him more strongly, and he chafed till he should be gone. So he said to the hermit, "Let me go now, for even as they say of death, the longer the colder, so it is with the parting of friends. But I know also that I go too soon, for you have perceived of me more than ever I told you, and of a certainty with your counsel I might have feathered my shafts. And though this may not be, yet tell me now, I pray you, in few words, of the likelihood of this my journey, how it shall prosper or in what danger it shall come, that I may thank you and fare the better."

But the hermit said, "In this you are astray: for that which a man may learn in solitude is not knowledge but wisdom, and wisdom is not of this or that, but of the nature of things. So now concerning you, I know not how you shall fare, but I know of that which you may become, and in some part I know the way thereto. Follow therefore your desire, for so only can you live and be alive, and this is the first secret. But the second is this, that you serve another, for so only can you put away your enemy that was born with you. And truth it is that if a man overtake his desire and have not done away his enemy, it had been better for him that he had died first, for he shall never have peace."

And Ywain heard the words and marked them, for they were spoken deeply. But what the meaning of them should be, that he knew not yet, for his mind was all a-bubble with the thoughts of his journey and of the boy, and of the fighting that he had seen in the vision. And the hermit perceived that he was distraught and in haste to be gone: and he stood up and bade him good-speed. But first he took a promise of him that he would come again, and then he spoke the last words and turned away into the wood.

And with that Ywain's heart fell, and his strength was slackened, and he laid his hand to the stem of a pine-

tree and leaned upon it, that he might keep watch upon the hermit until he should be wholly gone from him. And at the first he saw him as a living man, but afterwards as a shadow without form or substance; for that which he saw was ever moving through the forest and the moonlight, as a fish is seen dimly in green water, going among the reeds. And at the last he saw him not at all, for the very shadow of him was wholly mingled with the night.

CHAPTER IX.—OF YWAIN'S JOURNEY BY NIGHT, AND HOW HE WAS BROUGHT BY A LADY TO THE PLACE OF HIS VISION, AND SO LEFT HER.

So Ywain turned him from his watching: and as he turned him he drew his breath again, and his heart rose and he took the path strongly among the heather. And he went therein a good two hour or more, until he saw upon his left side how the land rose up ridge-wise like the back of a great hog: and for all that it was night, yet he saw the top of the ridge clearly, as it were a black line that ran along the sky. And thereover stood the moon all broad and yellow, and he perceived that this was the place of her setting, as the hermit had shown it to him by his counsel. Then he knew that it was hard on midnight, and he had great gladness because that he had come so far on his way and no time lost. And he left the heath and took a good road that was below the ridge, and for a little space the moon hung above him as it were a great lantern of yellow horn. And then she sank behind the ridge, and in no long time afterwards the land was dark.

Nevertheless he ceased not to go swiftly and without stumbling, for the stars were now brighter before him, and the road under his feet was smooth and white with dust, so that he had no need to walk warily. And as he went he remembered all the words of the hermit, and he turned them over in his mind as a man turns over his money upon his hand: for it may chance that he knows not yet how much it is, or in what manner it may serve him. Even so Ywain considered the words of the hermit, and namely the two secrets: whereof one was plain to his understanding and one was dark. For he was of himself fully minded to follow his desire; but to serve another was no such matter, seeing that in his old life he had served both lords and overlords, and for his wages had little but weariness. And in this wise he reasoned hotly as he went, speaking as it might have been to the hermit himself there present.

Then upon the instant his sight went from him, as it happens many times to those that reason hotly. And he saw no more the road beneath him nor the stars above, but

by seeming he came again into the house in the rock, and there was the hermit sitting over against him, and his eyes shining in the twilight. And Ywain said to the hermit, "What is this secret that you have told me, and how can a man both follow his desire and also serve another? For by his desire he would be free, but service is to freedom as water upon fire." And the semblance of the hermit looked at him and nodded kindly, but he answered nothing to Ywain's questioning, save that he spoke again the former words.

Then because of the hermit's voice and the deepness of it and the quiet of his house, the tangle in Ywain's heart was untwisted and he had no more lust of reasoning. And he came back as it were from another place, and perceived that he had been a long time absent, for the way was changed beneath his feet, and from being a high-road was become a green ox-drove, and the stars in the sky were few and pale.

Then Ywain saw that the night was far gone, and fear came suddenly upon him lest in his dreaming he should have wandered aside from the right way. And he stood still to peer about him, but he could see nothing save only the ox-drove and a little bank that was the border of it, and the field beyond the border. But while he stood still there came the sound of a cock crowing: and in the same instant he was aware of a tower that lay hard by, and it lay in the field all bare and open where he had looked before and had seen nothing, until the crowing of the cock. But now he could see it without peering, and how it stood on a little mound in the field, with a pool beside it and a great rowan-tree thereby.

Then he made to go to the tower, and when he came to the bank to pass out of the ox-drove he found a gate therein: and he looked over the gate and saw how there was a door opened in the tower, and a woman that came out from it, and she began to go towards him over the field. So he passed through the gate and went out to meet her. And as he went he perceived that she was some great one, for she was richly arrayed in colours all of blue, and her raiment was close about her as the sheath is about a flower. Also she wore a veil and not a hood, and the veil was upon her head only and not upon her face, and it was light and cloudy like smoke in still air.

And when they two drew together the lady bade Ywain good-morrow, and great wonder took hold upon him: for her voice came to him as it had been out of old memory, and whereas in her outward seeming there was nothing that was not strange to him, yet by her speaking he was persuaded heartily that he had known her all the years of his life. Then she asked him whither he went, and he began to tell her of the place of the stepping-stones and of the fighting beyond the water. And she heard him courteously, but while he spoke she ceased not

to go forward, so that in short time they came again to the bank and the ox-drove.

And Ywain looked before him in the half-light, and again he was amazed: for the gate was there by which he had passed out, and beside it were two horses, a white and a black, and by their bridle-reins they were tethered to this post and to that. Then the lady came to the white horse, and she laid her hand upon the mane of him, and her one foot she gave into Ywain's hand and so went to saddle and rode fast away. And Ywain took the black horse and followed hard after her: and they rode long and the sky lightened towards dawn, and they went ever faster and faster, till the wind rushed by their faces as a stream rushes by the stakes of a weir.

So they came to a wood and coasted it, for the trees of it were set so thick together that no horse might go therein: also the land fell sheer and sudden within it. And in a five furlongs more the lady stayed her galloping, and she leapt down and cast away her bridle-rein and turned her into the wood. And Ywain followed after her, and she caught him by the hand, and they two ran down the wood together with pain and stumbling. And they came to the edge of the wood, and the land there was level, and Ywain looked out between the trees and saw the place of his vision, for there before him was a meadow and a broad water with stepping-stones, and beyond the water was a bank. And upon the top of the bank there went a banner, with men fighting about it: but child there was none to see, neither upon the stones neither upon the bank.

Then Ywain raged within himself to go forward, but first he turned him of his courtesy to give thanks to the lady, for he said that without help of her he had never come there: whereby he was wholly bounden to her, if that she would command him in anything. And she looked him in the eyes and said to him, "Yea, sir, are you so bounden? Then have I found a friend to my need: for I have a hundred knights that are sworn of my allegiance, yet there is none of them that serveth not his own desire before mine."

Then despair came upon Ywain, as upon a wild thing that is trapped, and he struggled blindly and saw no way out. And in his struggling he heard the sound of a horn that was blown behind him, and he turned about and perceived him that blew it standing upon the height of the bank. And at the blare of that horn all the blood of his body was made fire, and he left the lady alone and went furiously up to go into the battle.

(*To be continued.*)

FROM THE OUTPOSTS.

THE MAKING OF A CHIEF.

FIFTY years ago the Hudson Bay Company's traders were still blazing trails across the regions of Alberta and Saskatchewan. Winnipeg was in the limitless West, and beyond lay the unknown. Wandering tribes of Indians, great herds of buffalo, moved across the vast expanses of rolling grass. From the ice-bound fastnesses of the Arctic regions to the steel boundaries of the first American Transcontinental railroads, was an empire of whose extent and riches few but the Hudson Bay adventurers had any knowledge. From Winnipeg to the foothills of the grim Rocky Mountains a thousand miles of unfenced land stretched in long waves. From Butte in Montana to the mouth of the great Mackenzie river 2000 miles of unconquered prairie stretched itself lazily in its eternal sleep. It was the empire of the trapper and hunter, and its owner was the Hudson Bay Company, always ready to dispute possession with any who dared to poach within its great preserve. Every man in that great country worked for the Company, or else was a piratical foe adventuring like Drake of old into unknown regions after loot. Roman Catholic priests worked and lived among the Indians, but even they were dependent for everything on the factors of the Octopus that held all Canada's North-Western Territories in its relentless grasp.

Then gradually from out the East were thrust two tentacles of steel. They reached Winnipeg, they crept on and on into the unknown beyond, and whatever they gripped they held unyielding—in front and behind a ragged roaring army of men.

This was a new trail being blazed, a trail the Indians did not understand. From the Octopus they had received beads, and better still, old guns, that made great noises and killed buffaloes and elk far surer than and at fifty times the distance of bows and arrows. But this new steel tentacle gave nothing. Instead, it spread into the land men, men, men. They ploughed and sowed and reaped. They built and fenced. They wrung from the soil the wherewithal to live. Before this rushing inexorable tide of humanity, which clung close to the steel arms of its strange invisible mother, the Indians fell sullenly back. To-day they are still falling back; back into the vast silences of the Northland; back into the still unknown regions of muskeg and lake; back into lands bounded on the east by the Hudson Bay, on the west by the Rocky Mountains, on the south by

the steel of the Grand Trunk Pacific, and on the north by the Arctic Sea.

Sometimes in Edmonton are seen tall, dignified men, lithe and muscular, huge statues in bronze, robed in wonderful clothes of untanned deerskin. Sometimes the men are smaller and of stockier build, flatter faces, and less graceful in movement. To the inquirer all are Crees, Indians from the northern parts of Alberta, whose homes are somewhere in the Mackenzie district. Leaving Edmonton and taking to the old, old trails, passing beyond Athabasca into the country of the Great and Lesser Slave Lakes, the traveller finds bands of these same Indians wandering over the country. They come into the mission stations, gather round the father for a day or two, and then are swallowed up once more in the mysterious beyond.

Sometimes two or three slip away for some weeks. They journey to the Hudson Bay Posts, sell their furs and return. Beyond this they have practically no relations whatever with the white men who have driven them North. If they chance across the latter on the trail, a curt greeting, courteous yet cold, and forbidding any advances, is the sole intercourse.

The Indians beyond the Athabasca are all generalised as Crees. As a matter of fact the real Cree is the smaller race, a race that has probably been forced over the Rockies by raiding Mongolians on the Pacific. The taller, finer built men are another race altogether, a conquering race from the South, the Kohawahas. They are sinewy, big-chested men, with long thin faces, high cheek-bones, and masses of black hair, seldom braided. A band of leather or coloured cloth is worn, like the old Roman circlet, on the head.

The old trappers of that country tell that many generations ago these men came from the South and conquered the Crees, but in turn were absorbed by the vanquished, just as the Manchus were assimilated by the Chinese. Proof of their ancestry is said to be given by the feathered head-dress and war bonnet they wear, while the missionaries, who have in many cases taken great pains to trace the ancestry of their congregations, point to the curious writings of some of these Indians, which bear not only a close resemblance, but in many cases have the same hieroglyphics and words as the Mexican Redmen.

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In the early part of the summer of 1912, it was evident to the old trappers round Athabasca that some great event was going to take place in the unknown regions of the North. Bands of Indians were all moving in one direction, but beyond the Slave Lakes the movement was more pronounced. Bands from the Great Slave, from the Yellow Knife River; bands from the Great Bear Lake, from the Little Lake country; bands from as far east as the shores

of the Hudson Bay and west to the Rocky Mountains, were all hurrying northward by canoe, by pony, or on foot. Converging towards one point, they moved, a solid army, magnificently caparisoned. Bands meeting each other exchanged formal greetings as from one commander of a regiment to another, and then swept onward, northward, ever northward, in a long unbroken stream. Many a trapper watched them pass; many exchanged greetings with chiefs they knew; some questioned—

"Where you going?"

"Woaoota's village!"

"Eagle Feather's?"

"Eagle Feather dead — we go make Copper Wing big Chief."

Eagle Feather dead! The great Cree chief across the Great Divide! Most of the trappers in that country had heard of Eagle Feather. Some knew and respected his son Copper Wing, head of the Crees, greatest of chiefs in all the North-Western Territories. Eagle Feather was dead, and the Indians of the whole country were swarming to his village to proclaim Copper Wing their chief.

"When make big Chief?"

"When moon full."

One or two trappers hinted that they too would like to be there, but they were courteously but firmly discouraged from making any such attempt.

Now some five years ago I had been trading and hunting for furs round the head-waters of the Mackenzie. I had made close friends with two Indians, whom I had met one day on the Athabasca on my way into the country. A lucky shot had saved the life of one, and in return they had taken my partner and myself right up into their country and given us splendid hunting. On our return to the Slave we had met a large band of Indians going south. My Indian comrades exchanged greetings, and I found they were of the same village. One came to me and said his Little Chief was there, and wished to meet us. Formal introductions and the pipe of peace followed. We found that the chief was sending some of his bucks down with the season's furs. He, speaking excellent English, told us they would escort us if we so wished. My partner jumped at the chance, and, though I felt sorry at leaving our companions who had proved such excellent friends, the opportunity was too good to be missed.

Next day we all travelled on south until about noon, when we came to the river, which meant separation, as those going on would take canoes. Just as the river was sighted the chief turned to me suddenly and said—

"Have you had good hunting?"

I told him that, thanks to his bucks, we had been very successful.

"If you come back with me," he said, "I shall give you very fine hunting, and you will come out next year with lots of furs."

For a moment I scanned his face incredulously. I was wondering if he really meant his

invitation. I knew from others that the Crees had very little use for white men, yet here was their Little Chief, which meant the son of the Head Chief, inviting me to come back with them to their village and promising me a fine hunt next season. Seeing my hesitation, and reading my mind like a book, he held out his hand.

"You come," he said. "You have been a good friend to my bucks, now I'll be your good friend if you will."

I hesitated no longer. In a few minutes I told my partner I was going back, and arranged to write to him in London, where he was going, when I would be out. My share of the hunt was to be paid into my bank in London. Thus I turned my back on civilisation, and it was two years before I saw my partner again.

But those two years I spent roaming the lands beyond the Slave Lakes in company with Copper Wing, the Little Chief of the Crees. True to his word, he gave me wonderful hunting, and I brought close on $20,000 worth of furs back to civilisation. His father, Eagle Feather, had also proved my friend, and once I was sorely tempted finally to cast off civilisation and become an Indian. However, as Copper Wing said to me when we finally parted, "The call of blood is too strong for man; if you stayed with us you would become weary of being Indian, and then you would go back to your own people; you are a young man, with life all before you, you might stay here and be a chief, but your heart is too big, and it would draw you back to your own land."

So I went, but every year would come to me a gift from Copper Wing, forwarded from Edmonton, and every year I would write and tell him of my wanderings.

Then one year, in the spring of the year, came a message: "My father is dead, they will make me chief at the full moon in July. Come to me, your friend, and be a witness of my vows." I was in Vancouver when the summons came, and straightway I left and journeyed north. Thus it was that I too made one of a band of Indians travelling to the village of Woaocta.

The Indians had with them their finest garb. It was as though they were travelling to the coronation of King George. Every description of rich rare furs for their dress — ermine, martin, black, silver, and blue fox; magnificent coats, leggings, moccasins, and other articles of clothing were made of the smoke-tanned buck, caribou, and elk skins, worked sumptuously with beads, silk, and quills. The canoes in which we paddled for days down the winding waterways were the finest of their kind, and everything that in any way could prove the wealth of the owner was packed in big skin bags, to be worn at the great ceremony.

At last we arrived at the head village. There must have been at least four thousand Indians gathered there in one

huge camp. As each chief arrived his followers made the camp, and then, arrayed in the finest robes he possessed, he took his arms and went out alone to the grave of his old chief Eagle Feather to pay his last respects. The dead chief's body lay in a rude wooden, painted coffin perched high in the trees. His bravery and skill had commanded the admiration of all the Indians of that vast country, and now they performed their last duties in much the same way as the last respects had been paid to King Edward VII. as he lay in Westminster Hall.

Each chief slowly approached the tree on which Eagle Feather's body lay, and, standing beneath it, raised his right hand above his head, palm outward. Then in solemn tones he chanted of those great deeds performed by the dead chief, of his powers in hunting, of his skill in governing, his reverence for the Great Spirit. (No longer do they chant of valorous battles with other tribes, of the scalps taken in raids, or the victims of the tomahawk; but now that peace, under the ægis of the Red Coats, the Royal North-West Mounted Police, reigns through all these territories, a man's bravery and virtue is summed up by his prowess in hunting.) Having thus paid his respects to the memory of his dead chief, he would pause, and then, once more raising his voice, he would chant of such deeds as he himself had accomplished—not in any spirit of vainglory, but that the Great Spirit might recognise that he was no unworthy comrade of the dead man. At the conclusion of this chant he would reverently lay at the foot of the tree some small gift, such as a skin or tooth, or other small token taken in hunting. The chief would then turn and walk solemnly some paces from the tree as the braves of his tribe advanced towards him, and each laid a small token on the ground. All the while their chief stood with his back to the tree, arms folded and head bowed, motionless as a statue, until all his braves and bucks had performed their last duties.

This ceremony completed, all returned to camp and regathered with other Indians of their own rank, and spoke in soft sibilant tones of the hunting and trapping of the great North Lands, much as farmers meeting on some great occasion in Winnipeg will converse of the crops. But the Indians, in their conversation, in greeting old friends or making new acquaintances, never spoke one word of the dead chief, or the great ceremony about to take place.

I also, on arrival, paid my respects to my old friend Eagle Feather, reciting in my own language something of the kindness I had experienced at his hands, and telling him of my adventures in other parts of the country since I bade him my last farewell. Then I also turned back to the camp, feeling like a stranger in a

strange land; for although Copper Wing's message had served me as a kind of passport northward, I had only met one Indian I knew in former days. But no sooner had I reached the main village, intending to make my way to Copper Wing's wigwam, than I was met by two men whom I knew well. They brought me Copper Wing's greetings, and conducted me to a splendidly equipped wigwam which he had placed at my disposal.

Here I was visited by Copper Wing's sister Nakuta, a splendid-looking young woman, of about twenty-three, with whom I had had many hours of companionship in my former visit. She had taught me much of Indian lore, and being well educated herself (having been to the convent in Edmonton for some years), had proved herself not only a trusty comrade but an excellent friend. It was on her account I had hesitated to return to civilisation. If she had attempted to persuade me to stay I would have become a Nitchie; but she, with a selfless cowardice which might be envied by her fairer sisters, had seen clearly that for the white man, brought up in the din of the world, the silent fastnesses of the North would prove but a sorry prison for which even a woman's love could not compensate.

She had made the matter plain in the picturesque metaphor so much in use among the Indians. "Shall the eagle's wings be clipped so that he soar no more into the great world of sky and sea he loves so well; shall a woman's hand destroy the pinions the Great Spirit gave to the white man? In the world he knows the beaver can build no dams; the Great Spirit gave the beaver and the eagle different work to do; the hunting-grounds of the one cannot be the hunting-grounds of the other, for the eagle swings clear in the sky, far above the haunts of the beaver in the forest."

And now I met Nakuta once again, with something of the old thrill, for she was lithe and tall. Her splendid coat and skirt of untanned elk hide, beautifully worked and ornamented with beads, fitted close about her supple body; her great brown eyes gazed frankly into mine as I held her hand in silent greeting. Thus for one moment we stood, and then she turned to the tent entrance—"Little One," she cried, and like a flash there ran to her a tiny child, brown and merry, like a dormouse slipping through the grass.

"Nakuta!" I exclaimed.

She laughed happily.

"You shall meet Hawkeye, his father, to-night," she said, and picking up her child glided from the tent.

That night, sitting by Hawkeye's fire, he told me how he had wooed Nakuta soon after I had gone. She had spoken to him frankly of me, and what friends we were. Such jealousy of our friendship as Hawkeye had ever felt had soon disappeared, and by talking of me and the hunting trips we

had been on together, Hawkeye showed himself something of a diplomat. To Copper Wing's great delight Nakuta had consented to become Hawkeye's wife, and the marriage ceremony had been quite an event of some three years before.

For about a week after my arrival we spent the days in hunting and fishing. At night we sat round the fires and spoke of many things. In my previous sojourning with these people I had learned much of their language, and could understand most of what was said.

On the eighth day would be the full moon. The evening previous to this the great ceremonies began.

The camp was spread in a huge semicircle, like the horns of an ox, with the village of Woaocta as the forehead. On the tips of the horns spread the forest; on the neck the Great Lake; the space in between the horns was level park land, probably fifty acres in extent; in the centre of this park a council fire had been built. On the evening of the seventh day at sundown the chiefs of seventeen tribes gathered round this fire. The sub-chiefs gathered the braves in separate bands, like soldiers under their company officers, and formed a dense semicircle spaced company by company some distance away from the fire. Daylight fails but for a short hour or two in the summer, but on this occasion the moon rose clear on the horizon, silvering the waters of the lake. At the first sign of the rim of the moon on the sharp horizon of the waters a tremendous rattling broke out in the forest, where the women of the tribes had gathered out of sight. This rattling kept up an incessant and horrible din until the moon was above the skyline. Silence fell as deeply as the noise before had been deafening, and not a sound could be heard amongst all that vast concourse of people. Then by the great council fire a figure stood out against the leaping flame. The youngest chief present had risen and in level sonorous tones made a speech which was nothing more or less than the nominating speech in favour of Copper Wing. When he sat down another rose and continued the recital. Each speaker dwelt on the character of Copper Wing as he knew it. One spoke of his powers in hunting; another of his brave deeds; another of his unselfishness. Most listened in silence, or now and again interjected a question. Such weaknesses as Copper Wing had had when a boy, were they eradicated? Had his education at a white man's college made him proud? Did he scorn Indian ways? The pros and cons of his character were fully and mercilessly analysed. But of one thing none spoke. Not one man questioned his knowledge of a chief's work, for, being the son of Eagle Feather, it would have been a reflection on that chief's greatness to have doubted the training he had given his son. At last the senior chief present rose and asked if any man objected to

Copper Wing as chief; if he did so he must speak now and make good his objection by the old method of challenge to combat. The scene irresistibly reminded one of the coronation of a British king, when the king's champion stands forth and challenges all men who object to the king's claim to do battle.

No man spoke, and so, going close to the fire, the senior chief raised his right hand as a sign of fealty, and with his left hand dropped a piece of meat into the fire as a sign of his tribe's allegiance. Each chief did the same, and then, advancing to his band, fires were lit in front of each separate tribe, and the oath was taken by the braves in similar fashion. (White men in America have substituted the ballot-box, but the method is curiously similar.) After the oath was taken the night's ceremony was over and the camp was soon wrapped in slumber.

During this time Copper Wing was invisible. Alone he stayed in his tepee waiting in silence the outcome of the chiefs' palaver.

What were his thoughts? Like the knightly champions of old he held lonely vigil. Twelve years before he had been sent to one of the great Indian schools and afterwards had graduated at college. Five years before he had returned to his father's wigwam. It was just at this time I had first met him. After he had talked to me of his people and his hopes and fears, filled with great ideals and real ambition, he had determined to devote his life to the good of his people. His education had seemed to him but a step on the road he must tread. He had endeavoured to fit his understanding of the white man's civilisation to the people over whom he hoped one day to rule. Many a night by the camp fire had he discussed with me the good and bad of our civilisation. He knew that to attempt to put the new wine of his learning into the old bottles of his people's superstitions and customs must end in dire failure. He had been a great hunter even in that country of great hunters. He knew the habits of every bird that flew and animal that crept, and now on the eve of his nomination he awaited the decision of his people. Was he to take his father's place, or must he see some other man hold the power, responsibilities, and honours of his father's position as chief of the Kohawaha tribe, which carried with it the leadership of the whole Cree race? Thus alone he communed with the Great Spirit, and awaited his fate. If the chiefs voted against him it meant exile—for could he, Copper Wing, son of Eagle Feather, the Great Chief, remain among the people that rejected him?

At sunrise the great camp stirred into life. Squaws were busy cooking meat and fish, children played their games in and out among the tepees; but the chiefs and braves arrayed in all their finest robes stood or walked around in silence.

Copper Wing's tepee re-

mained closed, for until the choice of his people was made known to him, and he took the oath of fidelity, none must gaze upon his face.

About an hour after sunrise the great semicircle was once more formed, and the women and children sent off out of sight into the forest.

Then at last into the centre of the semicircle stepped the head medicine-man; the senior chief stood by the closed tepee of Copper Wing; three blows struck by the medicine-man on a kind of tom-tom, made of a bear's skull, gave the signal; at the third blow the senior chief pulled back the curtain of the tepee, and Copper Wing came forth.

Tall, slight but beautifully built, about twenty-eight years of age, with strong, handsome, aristocratic features, his long black hair hanging loose on his shoulders—save only for the band of red leather round his forehead,—clad only in a loin-cloth or apron of plain buck-skin about eight inches square, and with moccasins on his feet, the new chief walked slowly and with wonderful dignity to the centre of the circle. It was an astounding sight to watch the total unconsciousness of his nakedness under the gaze of some four thousand eyes, that took in every detail of his finely formed body. No white man under similar circumstances could have undergone such a trial. It was as if the elected Premier of Canada was obliged to appear before all the members of the various Provincial Legislatures, and Dominion Parliament and Senate, naked as he was born.

For a moment he stood thus, the cynosure of all eyes. Then slowly he raised his right hand above his head, palm outward, and chanted the oath of fidelity to his people.

The rest of the day was given up to sports of all kinds, in which Copper Wing joined. He ran, jumped, rode, shot, and swam against all comers, and proved himself the superior of all the braves present. The older chiefs grunted their approval, and showed such enthusiasm as their stoicism allowed; but generally it seemed to be taken for granted that Copper Wing was the best man there.

At sunset came the concluding ceremonies. Although the chief had taken the oath and been notified of his nomination, and shown his powers, yet there remained the most gorgeous spectacle of all. The tribes must take the oath of fealty to their new chief, and with this oath goes the right of any man to challenge the chief to fight.

Arrayed in his very finest and rarest skins, most cunningly ornamented with beads, and wearing a head-dress of skins and splendid eagles' feathers, the new chief stepped from his tepee. Hanging from his shoulder was a smoke-tanned caribou skin, soft as velvet and covered with beads and quill-work, which made a truly magnificent coronation robe. Alone he advanced to the centre fire, where he stood alone, shadowed by the danc-

ing flames, and yet clearly outlined by the moonlight. The great dark masses of men around him and the blue-black depths of the forest behind him made a never-to-be-forgotten picture. Folding his arms proudly across his chest, he raised his head and held the people with his eyes. It is this moment which is the climax of the whole ceremony. If any man chooses he can leave the great circle of braves, and walking boldly forward stoop before the chief and throw a handful of dust into his face. This is a direct challenge to fight. If the challenger wins he has the right to choose another chief, or to take the chieftainship himself, when he too must accept any challenge offered. Within the memory of any living Indian of the North, this challenge has, however, never been given, and Copper Wing's election was no exception to the rule.

After a long pause, during which complete silence was kept, the chiefs stepped forward, and forming a close circle round Copper Wing raised their right hands, palms turned towards the chief. Then they turned their backs on him and faced the tribes, raising aloft as they did their rifles or any other weapons they carried. At once the whole sprang to life, and the braves followed their chiefs' lead, being immediately, in their turn, followed by the bucks. At the same time a most unearthly din was heard from the forest, where the women and children were hidden, and on top of this came the wild war-cry of the whole tribe. Time and again the cry was repeated: the spectacle was awe-inspiring. Gradually the tribes closed in round their new chief, shouting their war-cry in unison and bidding defiance to all the world, with nothing but the vast silences of the forest to hear them take their vow.

The shouting died away as suddenly as it rose. The circle was once more formed, and figures clothed in skins, representing different animals, crawled in and out among the Indians until they reached the chief. All the while uttering weird cries, they circled round him, and then turned and made for the shelter of the forest as quickly as they could, compatible with the animals they represented. This was evidently meant to show that all animals as well as men are afraid of the Great Chief.

After this the seventeen chiefs formed a circle once more round the fire, each taking his knife and making a small cut in his forearm. One by one they held their arms over the flames and let the blood drop into the heart of the fire. Last of all the new chief did the same thing. The exact meaning of this ceremony no one seems to know, or how it originated; but there is a belief among the Indians that if the chief is false to the tribe, or any man is false to the chief, he will die within the year. Whether this part of the ceremony has

any relation to this belief is not known, but it probably holds out the threat of some blood-feud and vengeance, should the oaths so recently sworn be broken. It is hidden in the mists of tradition.

Once more the circle reformed; the tom-toms and rattles which had resumed their unearthly noise during the blood ceremony died into silence, and the chief medicine-man stepped forward, and in a few well-chosen words introduced the chief to the people present. This is nothing more than the recitation of the tales of the chief.

Thus is a new chief nominated among the Cree tribes of the great Canadian North-West. Thus was my good friend Copper Wing installed in the place of his father, Great Eagle Feather.

Next day I spoke with Copper Wing for the first and last time on this visit. He presented me with some valuable furs and elks' teeth, and gave me an escort back to civilisation. In his presence I bade farewell to Hawkeye and Nakuta, and kissed the bonny little brave whom the latter had brought into the world.

. . . . . .

Fare ye well, brave friends of the vast Northland. Nevermore may I see you, but the Great Spirit that guards yours and mine alike watches over us. Fare ye well, till we meet in the Happy Hunting Grounds.

MENTZ WILKINSON.

ZŬR, ZŬN, ZŬMEEN.

The inner histories of happenings are often very different from the recorded story. In clubs and places where they gossip, as the rubric might have it, in drummers' parlours at commercial inns, in the secretaries' rooms in legations, in the lobbies of army headquarters, and at all unexpected times and in all unexpected places, comes now and again the flash of the inner history. You may get it in the hospital tent among those labelled with the green ambulance ticket, the men who are almost certain to die and are hardly worth the helping. You may hear it from the crippled Eurasian who was at work when a lad on the railway culverts in the Mutiny, or from the palsied old men who were at Chillianwallah. You are certain to hear it at the bar in the club at Aden, and even in the coffee-bar of the old Lord Warden, at the Savage Club Lodge, or the 'Morning Post' Embankment Home.

There are so many things worth hearing the inner truth of. Why did Kaiser Wilhelm leave Palestine so suddenly? What was really the trouble at Colenso? Did Alexander of Macedon really cut the canal barrage on the Euphrates and so turn Mesopotamia to a waste again? What did Charles the First mean when he said "Re-

member," before the axe fell? If you heard the real true story of Zabern and how it came about, you would know why the German Army was so angry and sympathise with it.

In Persia, that old, old country, whence come so many of the wise sayings of the world, there is a saying which lays all the world's troubles to three causes — *Zŭr*, *Zŭn*, *Zŭmeen*, Gold, Women, Land. We say cards, wine, and women, which is only the western form of the statement. It may be noticed that woman is common to both. Then apart to some extent from the "inner history" we have "the other side of the story." Lately there has appeared that extraordinary jumble of Indian history in its false outer cover—outside 'Some Random Papers of the Pickwick Club,' inside 'The Indian National War of Independence of 1857.' It was a description by brains of infinite subtlety of the Mutiny from the point of view of a twice-born race struggling to free itself from a foreign dominion. Fortified by quotations and extracts solely from British writers, it stands a masterpiece from the anarchistical crucible of Krishna Varma and the Savarkars.

The following is an inner history of the great Frontier risings in India of 1897 from the point of view of the wayside. It will be remembered, perhaps, how in the days long long ago, before even the Boer War, the whole length, or almost the whole length, of the North-West Frontier of India sprang, without apparent rhyme or reason, into open revolt. It began in the worst part of the year in Waziristan, and then all during the summer and autumn the fiery cross raged up and down the border from the Malakand to Wana. Section by section, clan by clan, tribe by tribe, the long length of the Frontier exploded, burst into flame without any apparent correlation or concert, but in succession where least expected. As troops moved up to the Frontier from Hindustan and the Punjab, they had to be diverted from the appointed places of assembly, and flung piecemeal to the spot which for the moment needed strengthening. A wave of Islamic fervour certainly was surging through the country. Turkey had just beaten the Greeks. Crescent had triumphed over Cross: the drum ecclesiastic of Islam was sounding fiercely. That was no doubt one of the reasons. The salt tax, the forward position of our outposts, our refusal to give up absconding wives so that their husbands might cut off their noses, were all said to be the grievances that had produced the extraordinary and unprecedented outbreak.

To the soldiery the causes of the trouble mattered not one jot or tittle. Off to the wars they went at short notice, each confident in the belief that whichever of their comrades was not to return it would not be him. That is one of the kindly provisions of nature that takes many a one through the dangers of life. Train after train ran over the thrice-

guarded bridge by the old Attock Fort, or crawled over the *pŭt* to the Indus bank at Kushalgarh. Guns, Gurkhas, more guns, camels, mules, troop horses, Atkinses, pioneers, jammed and jostled and bit and swore, while the sun got hotter and the dust got deeper. Below the terminus was a bridge of boats, only one, to come and to go by, to fetch and to carry on. Those who have helped to bank the fires in a stokehole will have some idea what that bridge of boats was like. Out in the open plain on the Peshawur side it was not much better: the wind blew, it is true, but it blew red-hot, like to strip the skin from even a brown man's face. But the nights were cooler, with a distinct promise of winter. Round about Jamrud, the fort that stands in the plain like a turret-ship, to guard the Khyber mouth, lay the best part of a brigade of all arms. Up and through the pass was another, with two or three battalions guarding the road. The battery of artillery to which I belonged had eaten the bread of discontent for some weeks, and the white dust of the plain lay heavy on our stomachs. It was therefore with immense delight that we had obeyed a summons to march up the road, that great road through which British armies had marched four times already in the last seventy years. However, there had not been much to do. Half a dozen shrapnel at the skyline had been about the size of it, and the time had not yet come that was to see anything more than the opening of the road. Away in the hills to the north and the south there had been great doings. In the Khyber we had the consolation of blind Milton, "They also serve who only stand and wait."

Now it chanced one day that it fell to my lot to take two guns with a foraging party up a side valley, to buy and bully forage from such villagers as were not on the war-path. Anent these- same foraging parties, folks there be who inveigh against paying for what in war time they can take by force, but they miss the point. Paying for forage is not paying for what you get, any mug could merely snaffle that, but it is an inducement to folk to bring it to you, instead of your having to go to fetch it, and finding it gone for your pains. However that may be, foraging is dull work for the gunners, who wait in some central spot to bear a hand if aught goes wrong. It is not till the hour of withdrawal, perhaps, that you get a hint that any one objects to your being there; then just as you are packing up it begins—perhaps an odd shot, perhaps a ring of sharp-shooting, from which to retire with dignity and without unavailing loss requires some skill.

On this particular occasion we had first of all halted by the high-road, where the side valley we were exploring turned off into a cleft in the mountains. The heights back to India were picketed, and the road was thronged with

convoys and all such as take advantage of the road being open. I had strolled away from the troops with no better companion than my own Colt, and sat on a culvert close to a stage for the posting *tonga* to change ponies at. The daily *tonga* with the mails had just come up, and from it had descended a stout European, a man in the postal service, or the telegraphs, or what not. Two young Afghans, possibly the road contractor's employees, were talking by the culvert in Pushtoo, which I happened to understand. Said one bright lad, "'Twould be a merry jest to jab one's knife into that fat Englishman's paunch."

"Better not," said the other. "These swine always carry pistols nowadays."

Whereon, as a matter of principle, I made a display with mine. Folks who move across the border and do not wear their pistols openly do an evil thing. False pride makes a man ashamed to let his neighbour think that he is sufficiently apprehensive to carry one. Again let it be said, to hide your pistol is an evil thing. It is putting temptation in the way of God-fearing Pathans and Afghans. You have no conception the temptation that the paunch of an unarmed European presents to the average young man across the border. It is as the lure of the big game to the Englishman. If, however, that Englishman is obviously armed, that is a great assistance to the young trans-border man to resist temptation. It is like having Dreadnoughts and not telling your neighbour; it tempts him to be grasping. Anyway, the sight of my pistol helped the lads to overcome temptation, and they went about their business. Then I strolled on a bit further, and I heard a man singing, singing as if all the world should know his happiness. I looked for the owner of the voice. It came from across a brook by a homestead clustered round a loopholed tower, of that comfortable kind that has a solid base and a front door ten feet up that you reach by a ladder. Towers of that kind are a common feature of the countryside. The solid base prevents your being undermined. This is a country where sometimes for months together the owner of a tower never leaves it by day. He and his women-folk till the fields by night. Not by day, oh no! Not by day. The owner of the next tower, seven hundred yards away, owns a Martini rifle, a real one, not the kind that they copy in the armourers' booths in the Kohat Pass, but a real one, and knows how to use it. It is unjust, especially if you make no allowance for the fact that you got one notch in the score to the good by killing his cousin last fall. Such is life without the *Pax Britannica*—never dull; but now and again those who live it and have been to India on a visit, a few miles off, wonder if after all it is not better to

be able to go to sleep without wondering if you will wake up in the morning to find your throat cut, with your enemy wishing you the top o' the morning.

The life has its humorous side. A few miles farther along there used to live two chiefs, who had been at feud for many years. One of them had a cannon of sorts, a brass piece that made a fine noise and would hurtle a ball the best part of twelve hundred yards. His neighbour's manor-house lay a bare thousand away, and it was the greatest fun to see him and his friends scuttle from a harvesting when a stone ball ricochetted overhead. After half a dozen rounds had been fired the ammunition would run short, and then the neighbour would declare a truce and sell back the balls to the owner of the cannon.

The singing rose high and melodious on the breeze. I saw a man digging lustily by a patch of Indian corn close to a shrine, and I strolled across to him. My pistol-holster was so conspicuous that we were sure to get on. As I approached he sang away more lustily than ever.

I gave him greeting after the custom of the country—

"May you never be tired!"

And he gave the answer, "May you never be down on your luck," and sang on.

"Are you well?" I proceeded.

"I am well," he replied, in duty bound, and continued his song. It was a merry one, all about the joy of a captive king who had escaped and got back to his kingdom.

"You must be very happy," I observed, "you who sing all day in time of war. What are you doing?"

"Doing, *Sahib?* Doing? I am digging my brother's grave. My brother is dead, killed by the Zakkha Khel for carrying your despatches. My father is dead, killed last week by the English soldiers. My wife has run away to Peshawur and you won't give her up. I sing, *Sahib*, lest I weep. Song is better than tears for a man."

And here my friend threw down the long irrigation spade he was using, and stood up, as good-looking, straight-limbed a lad as ever followed Alexander of Macedon to father good-looking sons in a strange land. Afghan he might be, but not of the Ben-i-Israel; there was nothing Semitic in the blue eye and straight profile. Straightway we liked one another as man to man, the handle of the Colt being witness to our brotherly mood. So I gave such sympathy as a man may, and we talked of affairs and this foolish war. We agreed it was a foolish war, but still young men were young men. Then he said, "*Sahib*, do you really want to know the reason of this war?"

A year and a half later an excited Dutch lady whose husband, the predikant of the *dorp*, I had just arrested for high treason in Cape Colony,

asked just the same question in the same manner. "Captain, do you really want to know the reason of this war?" Her answer was, "Because you English always think yourselves a little better than the Dutch." That, no doubt, is a world-wide sore, and accounts for the new Continental words *fivocloquer* and *offtake*. My Afghan friend's question was the same, the answer was longer.

"I will tell you the reason. You say that the tribes are foolish, that the young men are foolish, and that the elders can't restrain them, and must needs go with the stream or they will no longer be the elders. That is so, that is fact, but that is no reason. The tribes are not the only men who are fools. Now for some purpose the English Government wished to keep open the passes. That is an old story, and I have heard my father's father tell the same when Zemaun Shah was Emperor of Kabul. For thousands of years folk have wanted to keep the passes open, and we folk, the Pass tribes, have lived on it. In the beginning the English were wise, wiser than now. When they first began to pay us to let their merchants through the passes, there lived in Peshawur a family of *Khanzadahs*,[1] lords of the land, who had always been influential among us. They were the lords, and we knew it and they knew it. When the Sikhs, on whom be all misfortune, ruled in Peshawur, there was a *Balaitee*[2] general there called Witbul.[3] Even in his time the *Khanzadahs* were our lords, and were friends of Witbul *sahib*. That *sahib* was a *zorwallah*,[4] two dead men always hung at his gate, and Peshawur was quiet. When the English went to Kabul in the old time, it was the *Khanzadahs* who managed the Pass tribes. How do I know? Oh, my father and his father knew. So when the English tried to keep the passes free for merchants it was to the *Khanzadahs* to whom they looked. They paid them many *lakhs*, and the *Khanzadahs* became very great men. This is how they managed the tribes. They knew as I know what a savage the Afridee is, always except the Malik Din Khel, who are almost *Khanzadah* themselves. Yes? I am a Malik Din. How should I know about *Khanzadahs* otherwise?

"Once a year they sent for the *jirgahs*, who came in to them. They were met at the gate of the city by the *Khanzadah's* servants and escorted in great state to their residence. The head of the family received them in Durbar, with his family round him, very graciously inquired after their doings and their flocks and their feuds, gave them a feast and some good advice, and to the head of the *jirgah* a gold em-

[1] Lit., "noble-born."
[2] European.
[3] Avitabile, the Italian general in the Sikh service.
[4] Strong man.

broidered *lungi*[1] worth perhaps Rs. 20, *Sahib*, then to another a pair of embroidered shoes worth perhaps Rs. 10, *Sahib*, to the small son of the head a *kulla* worth perhaps five rupees, or hardly as much. That *jirgah* went on their way rejoicing, immensely gratified with their reception, vowing that the *Khanzadahs* were worthy heads of worthy clans.

"And thus, *Sahib*, were all the *jirgahs* treated, and they went and did what the *Khanzadahs* advised."

It was true, simple *Welt Politik*. In Australia who cares for the jumped-up ones. In Ireland, ah! in Ireland, nay, for the matter of that, in England, the new landlords are not like the old. However . . .

"There came a time when there was only one of the family left, the *Khanzadah* Allahdad Khan, and he alone controlled the tribes as his family and fathers had done. And then he died. All wise men knew that *they* could handle wealth, but that the bare-legged men of the hills could not. Now, *Sahib*, what happened? Your Government is a very wondrous Government, with foolish ideas about men and how to manage them. There were none of the *Khanzadahs* left, and though *we* knew who could take their place, Government did not. Yes, yes, of course, the Commissioner *Sahib* at Peshawur knew — he knows about all things, that is his business. I mean the Lord *Sahib* and the Sekertaries who issue the *firmans*. A sekertary gave an order that the allowances were to be paid to the tribes themselves. An order came for all the head-men and the heads of *khels* to come to Peshawur. They came. A *policewallah* met them at Hari Singh Burj and Bara Fort. No, there was no ceremony. He brought them to a dirty bungalow with a dirty compound near the jail. A *sahib*, perhaps only a second-class *sahib*, sat dressed in a cotton suit. What do I know about second-class *sahibs*? Why, I've been to Calcutta. Then a babu called out from a list.

"'Jan Fishan Khan, *malik*, Zakkha Khel, 8000 rupees, *lejao aur dastkhat karo*.[2] If you can't sign make a mark.'

"A chapprassi handed him bags of rupees, and the man, a real savage *malik*[3] from Maidan, staggered away with the bags, wondering, but of course pleased. He had never seen a hundred rupees in a bag before. And so the foolishness went on till the *sahib* had finished, when he went off to his own house. That is all, *Sahib*, and the tribesmen went away together amazed, but knowing not whom to get advice from."

I marvelled to hear the story, partly from the shrewdness that the teller displayed, partly, too, because the tale must have been

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[1] *Lungi* = head-dress; *kulla* = conical cap.

[2] Take it away and sign against your name.

[3] *Malik* = chief.

exaggerated, but I felt I had not quite got to the end.

"Well, and what then?"

"What then, *Sahib?* What then? Why, what happens if you give a Turkomani horse to a beggar donkey-boy in a Ghilzai *kirri?* The *maliks* became *Duniya-dar*, *Sahib*, and as you know when a man becomes *Duniya-dar*, especially when he is not *Khanzadah*, he loses all wisdom and must fight."

That was it, they had become *Duniya-dar*, that beautiful expressive Persian expression, "Owners of the world." To become *Duniya-dar* and not know how to behave! An old old story in an old old world. Set a beggar on horseback and he will ride to the devil, from Jeshurun to Napoleon Buonaparte. Old wine into new bottles and the bottles had burst, that was my friend's diagnosis of his friends the *Duniya-dars*. These same at that moment were on the top of the wave, for I could now hear the rattle of musketry up the valley, and I had to leave the philosophic gravedigger and return to my cannon and bring fleecy shrapnel to burst along the hill-tops for the restraining of the *Duniya-dars*.

Time, the healer of sorrows and sore backs, added to the persistence of the soldiery who sat in the valleys while the *Duniya-dars* sat up on the hill-tops instead of doing their spring sowing, brought these same gentry to some show of submission, and the armies marched away. Then, after the custom of the artillery, "May I go on a year's leave?" said the captain, and the fates being kind, six months after meeting the gravedigger I found myself back in England. An old aunt had died and left me a small property in the West of Ireland. Thither I betook myself, to find a side-line at the end of the journey with the train crawling, as the loaded troop-trains had crawled over the *pŭt* to the Frontier. When we left the main line the stationmaster had called to the guard of the train—

"Fwhat are ye waiting for?"

"The signal's agin me."

"Faith ye're moighty particular this morning."

It reminded me of the complaint of the Eurasian assistant surgeon coming up with a consignment of medical panniers in the mail train through the jam on the Lahore sidings—

"Oh my! What sort of a mail train is this to wait for a local! Eh?"

It was a day full of Frontier reminders. At my destination I passed by the barrack, now deserted, which had held till a few years ago a squadron of cavalry. The wall was a bastion trace, and there was a loopholed traverse covering the gate, for all the world like Fort Jamrud. A troop of cavalry had been burned in their barracks during the Rebellion, and the men piked as they jumped from the upper windows. I had not seen the place since I was a lad and ran wild over the bog and the moor with my neighbours.

Leaning over a culvert out-

side the demesne, a man passed the time of day, and then stared at me.

"Are you our new captain?" I admitted the impeachment.

"Glory be to God, we've got a man at lasht! Don't you remimber Micky Flannagan, sorr, that taught you to tie a fly?"

Happily I did, and shook hands very heartily. It is good to find some one that remembers you when you come to your own countryside. We sat on the culvert and talked of this man and that, and what had come over the country at all, and how the quality had all left the countryside. Then we talked of the tenantry and the lads I had known.

"What became of Larry O'Shaughnessy, whose father had the bit farm up on the Boyle water?"

"Bad cess to him! He went to America and came back with a mint o' money. It was more than he could sthand at all. He drank and he gambled and he fought the polis, and behaved just like one of the gintry, him that didn't know the good whiskey from bad, Mister Garge. He's been in jail these lasht two years, and fwhat would ye expect, a bog-throtter like that getting the money."

And then I remembered again my friend of the Khyber digging his brother's grave in the *kach* at Torwam, and his views on those who unexpectedly became *Duniya-dars*. Just the same story that comes down through the ages. In the Book of Wisdom, which some call The Wisdom of Jesus Ben Sirach, it is written—

"As the matter of the fire is, so it burneth.
And as a man's strength is, so is his wrath.
And according to his riches his anger riseth."

G. F. MacMunn.

SKETCHED IN WAR TIME.—II.

BY A WOMAN RED CROSS SURGEON.

WARD FIVE.

"I WOULDN'T really mind going on night duty, if only there were no Peta Staia, no Ward Five, but that one room is worse than all the rest of the hospital together. The other wards go to sleep, at least generally, but there is always some one really very ill indeed in the Peta Staia keeping me there nearly all night! It's a dreadful room!"

Such was the opinion of the nursing staff of the Fourth Etapna Hospital, but there were two people in that hospital who loved the Peta Staia and who love its memory still, the Sister of Ward Five, and myself, the surgeon in charge. It could not well be otherwise after all the days and nights we worked there, all our struggles day after day and week after week to save Nikóla's leg and Peter's foot, and the desperate hours when we refused to let Georgi die, poor Georgi, who lay with his whole system poisoned from his septic wound, saying, "*Don't* do any more, Doktorké, I am so tired!" Almost all the worst surgical cases were in Ward Five, and, when we had bad medical cases as well, I confess that more than once, on reaching the door in the morning, I made some feeble excuse to myself and went and did something else, just to put off the moment of entering! And yet every day, when the plunge had been taken, when I had been round and had learned the worst, how Georgi —the typhoid — could not swallow, and Mitu opposite had another rise of temperature, and Peter — the foot— had a bad pain in his inside, and Peter—the fractured skull —was lying shaking with terror because his face had twitched, and he was sure the lady doctor would at once want to trephine him again, and Georgi—the fractured femur— had a rash, and Georgi—the septicæmia—had a temperature of 97 and a pulse of 120,—every day, heartened by the sight of my good comrade the Ward Sister and her faithful work, I continued the attack on the Peta Staia, loving it more than ever.

What times we had with naughty Peter and Ilía who would not stay in bed! Ilía had dysentery and Peter had a septic foot with inflammation of the veins of the leg, and in spite of all the threats and warnings in the Comrade's eloquent speech and in my Bulgarian, which though not extensive in its vocabulary was at least thoroughly comprehensible and forceful, these two friends and accomplices, boys of twenty or twenty-one, Peter the shepherd-lad and Ilía the farm-labourer, were continually disappearing from their beds and from the ward. Again and again we chased

them back and tucked them up, but still, whenever Sister's back was turned, as it frequently had to be, seeing she was in sole charge of (in quiet uncrowded times) twenty-five cases, the Irrepressibles would once more be found to have "softly and silently vanished away," and would next be seen by their harassed guardians standing in the compound in a piercing March wind, engaged in some lengthy conversation, or perhaps they would gently insinuate themselves into the ward after an hour or two's absence, having spent the time in calling on a friend in the next hospital! As the Comrade said, "If one only knew what they would do next, it would be easier!"

Ilía came to us first at the Convoy Corps Hospital in November with five wounds in his arm and a double compound fracture; he looked a haggard man of thirty, but as the wounds healed and the bones united, the lines of suffering disappeared, the bones of his face became less and less evident, until at last he looked what he was, a well-conditioned lad of twenty. He was a trial, but he was a dear boy all the same, and his silky black hair was delightful to pull! He had a sharp attack of pleurisy during his convalescence from dysentery, and he freely acknowledged that his chest-pain had come on after one of his forbidden rambles in the cold spring winds; but in spite of all his disabilities he was able to go home in April, when the Fourth Etapna Hospital was closed, jaunty to a degree in a new uniform whose scarlet shoulder-straps, facings, and cap were vastly becoming to his black hair and brilliant dark eyes.

And Peter? Poor boy, his wounded foot was not the only thing against which he had to contend, for his lungs were attacked by the tubercle bacillus, which wreaks fearful havoc among the Bulgarian people, and I can only hope he is now in some sanatorium. He was a quaint lad, a spoilt baby, the only child of his parents, and oh! the sulks when the cruel doktorka refused him the roast pork and sauerkraut which his soul desired. "Temperature high? Yes, of course it is, I know, and it will go on being high so long as I have no proper food. No, Sister, you may as well take it away and give it to somebody else, I will not take any more milk. What's milk? It is *food* I want." But when Ilía was ill, or when the other Peter was recovering after his operation, Peter watched over them as if they were sheep of his flock on the uplands of Bulgaria. He had ideas and reflections too, lying in the ward through the winter days or in the spring sunshine in the compound. The Sister of my second ward was engaged one day as usual in teaching me some more Bulgarian words in the few spare moments at our disposal, and the new sentence was, "Obícham nivéto, moréto, certzéto." "I love the sky, the sea, the heart," I repeated meekly after her, and a pensive voice from Peter's bed

remarked, "Yes, doctor, and what is in any of them? Koi asnaí, who knows?"

The Fifth Ward was the last to be cleared when the Fourth Etapna Hospital was closed; the cases there were the worst to move, and each time, as we walked slowly down the lines of beds writing the lists of those to be discharged, I shook my head as we came to the Peta Staia, and we said, "No, not yet, they must have a little more time." Once, when Ilía was moderately convalescent, his name got on to the list for Bulgaria, but Ilía did not want to go, and Ilía's temperature went up that night and stayed up the next day, and his name was erased. I had no doubt he assisted the thermometer, but after all there was plenty of room for him, the hospital was beginning to be emptied, and his pleurisy was still recent, so Ilía stayed with the Peters and the Georgis and Nikóla until there was no one else in the Fifth Ward, and the last morning came. The last morning, and the last dressings before the journey! The Comrade and I worked away at them to the accompaniment of impatient shouts from the compound below, where the carts were standing waiting: "Peta Staia! Kadé Peta Staia? Where is Ward Five?" and a Peter or a Georgi already dressed would put his head out of the window and say soothingly, "Da, da, yes, yes, it's all right, Peta Staia is just coming."

At last we had them all ready, and every one except Nikóla, whose fractured thigh was in plaster of Paris, walked downstairs alone or with the help of "the best crutches," one of the Tsaritsa's gifts to the hospital, and one by one we packed them into the carts to go to the station, and said farewell, not once or twice, but a dozen times, before the oxen were yoked and the wheels began their creaking roll; then, standing in the compound, we watched the carts disappear among the apple-trees, answered the last hail from one of the Georgis as the last cart was lost to view, and turning away we went sadly upstairs to the desolate barrack dormitory which for three months and more had been our Peta Staia—and Sister relieved her feelings by having a tremendous spring-cleaning.

HOSPITAL VISITORS.

"Peter Marínoff, Peter Marínoff of the 21st Regiment?" I looked up from Nikóla's fractured femur to see a little old woman coming slowly down the ward, scanning with anxious eagerness the beds on either side as she waited in vain for an answer to her call —"Peter Marínoff"—and then, "Is there *anybody* here from the 21st Regiment?"

"No, little mother, nobody here from the 21st. Is he thy son, this Peter Marínoff?"

"My youngest, O lady doctor. I am come from Bulgaria to seek him, and they

told me that here he might be found."

"Not in this room, mother, but look for him in the other wards, and, if not there, yet may he be in the Russian Hospital close by. They say new wounded arrived there last night. Farewell, and a speedy ending to thy search."

"Farewell, O doctor," and the sad little figure passed on to the next ward to ask again with quiet voice and eager eyes, "Is there anybody here from the 21st Regiment?"

How often did we hear them calling for their sons, their nephews, or their grandsons, sometimes a father and mother together, or a party of old people who had travelled in company from far away and were seeking their children through the long lines of hospital beds—seeking, alas, so often in vain! I met four men in the road one day hurrying towards our hospital. "Art thou from the Russian Hospital?" said the oldest of the four. "No," I said, "I am from the Fourth Etapna, next to the Russian Mission." "Ah, but perhaps thou knowest my boy, Dimíter Petkoff of the 18th Regiment? Is it not so?" But I had to confess that I did not know any of the men in other hospitals. "Is he surely there, and is he wounded?" I asked. "Yes, wounded at Adrianople; and they tell me he was brought to the Russian Hospital last night." "Oh then," I said cheerfully, "his wound will be but a little one, for all those who came last night were only slightly wounded." Never in my life have I so repented being cheerful. The old man looked at me. "Lady, it is my only son!" he said, and turned along the road, and I hoped with all my heart he would quickly find his boy at the Russian Hospital.

In the Convoy Corps Hospital we were often accosted by a small girl and boy with, "Please, doctor, can we go up and see Daddy?" We must first investigate the basket or the napkin-covered plate the children were carrying. "Oh, you are bringing sour milk, and eggs, and mekitzi (little breads) again? Yes, up you go." "Daddy" was one of our patients who had many friends and relatives in the town, and the delicacies they brought, too numerous for his sole consumption, were shared by several of the less fortunate men in the wards; but when, on the departure of the Convoy Corps, he was removed to the British Mission a mile and a half from the town, the Englishmen, as they afterwards told us, were obliged to prohibit his visitors, for an entire family would arrive in the ward in the early morning prepared to picnic there for the rest of the day!

Daily visitors to the hospitals were vendors of cigarettes, newspapers, sweets, eggs, and "sweet milk or sour," "mléko, mléko, présno o kícelo mlék-o!" and a roaring trade was carried on in the hospital compound among the convalescents, a fair amount of business being done also in the wards. We often wondered "what *would* they say at home?" as we saw the stores behind our patients' pillows,

and occasionally we were compelled to make a clean sweep of some really too choice collection, but for the most part we allowed the men to get what they liked. Poor fellows, many of them well on the way to be healed, and all longing for home, one had to make the place as little like a hospital barrack as possible, and if they did once or twice suffer from a too recklessly varied menu, what was a dose of castor-oil here and there? But there was one thing we sternly forbade, and that was roast pork in the middle of the night! We were only able to have one nurse on night duty for each hospital building, and consequently there was ample time for a gorgeous feast between Sister's visits, especially if there were several bad cases in other wards. But there came a night of discovery, when an English Sister was on duty, and then at last we knew the hitherto untraced cause of several internal complaints! Henceforth we kept an even more widely open eye on the presents and purchases of our patients, and the midnight banquets came to be but memories of a dear delightful past.

One day the hospital was thrilled by the news that the Queen was coming to Kirk Kilisse to inspect the hospitals! We were in the midst of spring-cleaning, the wards were being whitewashed one by one—"hurry, hurry, and get them done in time, before the Tsaritsa's visit!" For nearly a week we lived in daily expectation of her arrival, and at last the day really came. What could we do to show the welcome we were all feeling? We looked round, and there out in the fields was the almond blossom, waiting, inviting us to gather it. Sisters and patients made time to go out, and came back laden with glorious boughs of pink and white bloom, the unlovely wards were decked with its beauty, and every one was more than rewarded for their efforts when her Majesty exclaimed at the unexpected rosy loveliness, in the midst of the chill bareness of the hospital.

Queen Eleonora was a most gracious visitor, and a most practical one also; she spoke to each patient, not merely a word of greeting or of cheer, but inquiries as to how long they had been in hospital, where they were wounded, how were they progressing, were they warmly clad, and (oh, our joy when we heard it!) had the lame patients good crutches? The crutches we had were like Wordsworth's hedgerows, "lines of sportive wood run wild," and we blessed her Majesty ever after for the veritable crutches which arrived next day. The Tsaritsa is herself a trained Hospital Sister, and her interest was therefore that of an expert as well as of a mother of her people; and it is no wonder that her goodness of heart and thoroughly practical kindness have endeared her to her adopted nation. "Ah, yes, our Tsaritsa, our Eleonora, she is a Queen indeed; she does not only sit and talk about things, she

goes and sees and *does* them, and aren't we just proud of her? Some of your European (*sic*) Queens may be grander perhaps, but would we change with you? Not we!"

A RAILWAY JOURNEY.

Ten o'clock on a scorching April morning, and the station at Kirk Kilisse thronged with a hurrying crowd, anxious, perspiring, laden with hand-luggage, and, needless to say, all talking at once! The First Etapna Hospital staff was going to Tchorlu, and the Fourth Etapna was starting for Usún Keupru. There were a few other passengers travelling by what was always known as "The First Train," although there was no other during the twenty-four hours, but the *personnel* of the two hospitals already more than filled the compartments. In our division of the corridor carriage, which had comfortable accommodation for six, there were eleven people, eight crowded on to the uncushioned seats, two precariously balanced on some of the innumerable packages containing precious treasures, which could not be entrusted to the luggage van, and the eleventh standing, leaning on the outer door for support! But it was long before we were all packed into the train; every one knew everybody else on the station, and every one had to say good-bye to the rest of Kirk Kilisse, who had come to see us off; greetings filled the air and long farewells, for who could tell, in the fortunes of war, when we should meet again? There was the post-office clerk, a young law student of Geneva, who arrived at the station with our morning mail, pessimistic as ever, more depressed than usual because his opportunities of French conversation were leaving Kirk Kilisse with us, and seeing no hope of any change of work for himself. "No, docteurs, you are lucky, going to a new place, but there is nothing for me but to stay on here for months and months as I have already done. Yes, I tell you the war will not end yet. What did I say at Christmas? You did not believe it, but I was perfectly right, for here you are still in Bulgaria! You foreigners may possibly be able to go back home in a month or two, but for us others there will still be the hot post office, and the dust and the crowds, and, worst of all, no one to talk to! Au revoir!" and he went sadly back to work.

"Guten Tag," said a voice beside us, and we turned to see the recently appointed Censor of Correspondence (not the Censor chased by Kostadin), an actor from Vienna, "Not well known at present, but I hope some day to be among the stars,"—and if he entertains his audiences one half so well as he did ourselves, on the occasions when we took our own letters into town, to be stamped in his bare little office, up the rickety stairs of a

tumble-down house in a side street, surely one day he will rise like the sun, and his name will occupy that coveted position at the end of the cast, below the expressive "and"! We parted from him, exchanging good wishes for all our future careers, and promising to join an enthusiastic audience in applauding him some day in London town. Every one was "coming to London some day," and "Good-bye, doctors, until we meet in London," was a frequent and very cheering parting word.

Ding dong, ding dong! The second bell, and we all began to get into the train; the mass on the platform gradually reduced itself, and the capacity of that train was stretched to the uttermost. Final handshakes from the high windows, half a dozen people standing on tiptoe below, half a dozen crushed through the window-frame above, late comers hanging like a swarm of bees on every step and footboard, last messages and injunctions, then Ding dong! Ding dong! Ding dong! clanged the third bell, and slowly past the cheering waving crowds in the station moved the train, with handkerchiefs and caps thrust out from every window, and Good-bye, Good-bye—finis to the chapter headed "Kirk Kilisse." We left it after five months of work, with memories of many difficulties and some hardships, but with memories also of friendship true and gay, of generous helping hands ready to aid in troublous times, of pain and weariness bravely borne by sick and wounded, of untiring devotion and faithful tender care lavished upon their soldier brothers by the Bulgarian volunteer nurses in our wards, and with, we hoped, a wider and a deeper understanding ourselves of life, of service and of brotherhood.

Through Kirk Kilisse, with its dusty sun-baked streets, its old burial-grounds with the long Turkish tombstones reared in hundreds and now pointing to the sky in as many different directions, its domes and minarets, its forts, its vineyards, and its fairy fields of orchard blossom—on went the train, slow and relentless, past all the well-remembered places, until even our Fourth Etapna Hospital, the extreme outpost of the town, was lost in the trees, and a final backward glance showed only the white stones of the officers' graveyard on a mound among the meadows, and we sat down wondering which of us would be brought back in after years by the workings of fate to see once more "the City of Vines."

Puffing desperately along, the engine struggled over its appointed way, but, besides being a slow train which stopped at every station, "The First Train" was evidently also an express of the celebrated kind which stops between the stations. Many and exasperating were the halts on the track in the blazing heat, but the stations provided welcome relaxation, both physical and mental. Every one got out, met their friends, and continued the conversation broken off at the last stopping-place, until the second Ding dong!

sent us all flying back to our slippery wooden perches in the train. One and a half hours after leaving Kirk Kilisse, after perhaps fifty minutes of travelling, and forty spent in waiting on the way, we reached Alpoullou, the junction for Tchorlu, and here for four solid hours we awaited the train from Tchorlu to Adrianople, which would take us on to Usún Keupru. But what is four hours in the Balkans? We, after five months' apprenticeship, had learned to be almost Eastern in our attitude towards time, and could accept delay with placidity, simply resigning ourselves to fate, and sitting down with folded hands until the path was freed from obstacles and we could proceed as we had in the dim past intended. At Alpoullou accordingly we sat down to wait. First of all we joined the crowd in the waiting-room and sat upon one of the numerous beds which left small space for the two narrow tables which completed the furnishing of the room! We could not understand at first why there should be beds, but afterwards realised that wounded soldiers also had to "change at Alpoullou," and wait for hours perhaps as we had, or even for a longer time, so that there was really no madness in thus providing for waiting passengers, but truly thoughtful method. The station at Alpoullou was certainly in charge of some one with a sympathetic soul, for large cups of tea were served free of charge to all who wished it—and few, indeed, were the passengers who neglected the opportunity which they were so fortunate as to have. After a luncheon of tea, bread and cheese, we adjourned to a shady spot outside the station, sat on a log and talked till we slept, awoke to drink tiny cups of Turkish coffee sent over from the inevitable corner shop, and dozed again in the heat, awaking yet again to stretch our cramped limbs and drink another cup of delicious tea in the waiting-room, where we found more than one of our travelling companions fast asleep on the surrounding beds! After long ages, our despairing eyes saw the train at last creeping towards the station, but when eventually it drew up, alas, the officers' portion was already packed full, even the corridors overflowed with passengers! What could we do? Not another train for at least six hours! A keen-eyed colleague spied a horse-box not absolutely filled with soldiers, and to this we repaired with our lesser luggage, the other baggage, for which no resting-place could be found in any truck or van, remaining in charge of two orderlies, to be brought on by the next train. Up we climbed into the horse-box, piled handbags and rugs conveniently, and sat in the open doorless entrance kindly vacated for us by the soldiers, while four lucky members of the party, including myself, sat on the edge with our feet hanging over. It was a lovely afternoon, and we journeyed far more comfortably than in the crowded compartment of the morning train; we had room to move, plenty of fresh air, and, cool and revived, we were

able thoroughly to enjoy the hawthorn bushes, the little ponds with small white flowers like jonquils in the water, the fields of flax, the oaks in delicate leaf, or the vivid blue of anchusa carpeting some dainty dell.

On rolled the train through the sunny afternoon, among the low hills, the corn-fields, and the meadows, until we felt as if it must go on for ever, and for ever we should be carried through a world of afternoon—no more work, no more hospitals, no more sick and wounded, nothing to do but sit undisturbed and wonder what flowers there would be round the next corner. The train panted up a hill, and round the next corner was Usún Keupru station, and the railway journey of forty miles was over. It had taken eight hours to accomplish, and dusk was beginning to fall when we left our dreams of undisturbed repose, clambered stiffly from the friendly horse-box, and, mounting a tiny carriage like a baby victoria, were whirled at a reckless pace down the dusty hill from the station towards the new work awaiting us in the Field Hospital.

FROZEN.

"And you, Doctor, will take charge of the surgical cases. Let us go and see them." "With pleasure, M. le Chef," I replied, and we went down the steep hillside, away from the cholera tents where Two was working, past the enteric tents, which were in One's charge, till we reached the hospital buildings, a factory and a dwelling-house, on the banks of the river Ergene, and at the western end of the Long Bridge of stone which gives its name to the town of Usún Keupru.

In the dwelling-house, after visiting the operating theatre (which was also the dressing-room), the pathological laboratory, and two rooms inhabited by nursing Sisters, we went up the wide double staircase and entered a small room about twelve by fourteen feet, containing seven beds, all occupied. "These were all frozen in the second snowstorm in March," said the Director, "and these two," indicating two young men with pale yellow faces lined with pain, "have both had to have their feet amputated." There were twenty wounded limbs in that one room, and no one needed to ask in what state the wounds were. In spite of open windows the atmosphere told its own tale; gangrene had been at work. "Yes," said the Director, "when they arrived we were determined to save everything possible, but in many cases the fingers came away like a glove when we opened the dressing, or we would find the line of demarcation already well marked on the hand or foot—and what could one do? They are nearly all improving now." I gasped inwardly, looking at the weary faces on the low hard pillows; what these men must have endured in the days before

their wounds were "improving"! But the chief was going on—"There are several orderlies who are quite capable of helping with the dressings, and the Starshi (non-commissioned officer and head nurse) knows all the cases and can answer any questions." We visited the other three wards, and the factory where I had sixty more patients, and found much the same state of things in each, though that first room was worst of all. There were wounded in the other rooms as well as frozen cases, but, as in Kirk Kilisse, all the wounds were septic and discharging, though none of them were so appalling as those we had treated in our first little hospital. But the sadness of the frozen limbs, and the hopelessness of the years stretching before those young men! Think of them, four boys under twenty-five, with no feet and no fingers, and only the stump of a thumb! "What am I to do, Doctor?" said one boy of twenty-one, married already and with two babies—"what am I to do now?" Apart from the lump in my throat, I could not reply in sufficient Bulgarian, but the cheery Starshi came to the rescue: "Why, of course you'll soon be going to Sofia, and there they'll make you lovely gummi feet, you won't know yourself, they'll be so comfortable; oh, be sure of it, you'll do very well indeed, don't you fret." But no wounds I ever treated were so pathetic as those frozen feet. An orderly would arrive in the dressing-room, bearing on his back a young soldier with bandaged feet, would dump him down on the operating-table with a cheerful "There you are, Georgi, soon be dressed now, getting on fine you are, better every day," and two dressers would set to work, each on the remains of a foot or the stump of a leg, and Georgi, helpless on the table, would keep smiling, or would set his teeth for a while until the worst was over. The first day I was there, an elderly man and woman appeared in the room while the work of dressing was in full swing. On inquiry I found they were the parents of Ivan who had just been carried in to have his feet and hands (what was left of them) dressed. Ivan was their only child, and might they stay while his wounds were dressed? They would be very good and not say a word if they might but stay with him, they had come from Bulgaria to find him and were starting on the homeward journey to-day. Would the lady doctor be kind, and graciously allow them to stand by and see Ivan dressed? Poor souls, I let them stay in the end, and they kept their word and made no sound—I only wished they would. The father stood leaning against the wall crushing his cap in his fingers, while the mother stood holding the bandaged hands until the feet were finished, and then crouched down and took the maimed stumps into her arms, gathering them to her breast as if they were the tiny Ivan who had rested there not twenty years before. It comforted the lady doctor, if they had only known it, to see that Ivan would be well cared for when

he was eventually able to go to his village. One poor fellow of twenty-five, who had lost half of each foot and almost all his fingers, had not a relative in the world. No wonder he was so slow to acknowledge that his hands and feet were healing, and no wonder he made small efforts to hold his spoon in his bandaged palms, or to stand up on his heels and try to walk, as most of the frozen did. His eyes used to reproach me, when I urged upon the tender-hearted Sister the necessity of training him to use his hands and of not allowing him to remain a helpless baby, as if he said, "Why should I try to be well enough to leave the hospital, where I lie in a comfortable (!) bed, where good food comes to me each day, and where Sister feeds me and looks after me as if she were my mother? In the wide world there is no one else to care for me!"

Day after day we tended these limbs, there were between eighty and ninety surgical cases, with over 200 wounds to be dressed; and in spite of difficulties and drawbacks they improved wonderfully. Gradually the dressings decreased, both in number and in size, as the wounds healed up, until at last, just before we ourselves left Usún Keupru, we watched a long procession of convalescents marching slowly to the station, followed by carts taking those who were not yet able to walk so far, and beside those carts I said farewell to the last of my friends with the frozen feet. Only four were left behind, and they would soon be ready to follow the others to the central hospitals in Sofia. "Ah," said one of them, one of the many Georgis, "I am nearly healed of my wounds, and my inside is also recovered from its dysentery. Lo, now I see the reason why these Anglitchánki were sent to Usún Keupru!"

THREE TURKS.

The first Turk we met was the driver of our bullock-waggon on the trek from Yambol to Kirk Kilisse. We were rather alarmed to find that our cart, instead of being the property of one of the sturdy Bulgarian drivers, belonged to a Turk, but when he turned round our fears were set at rest. An elderly man, with a straggly little grey beard, a deeply-lined face, sunken eyes looking out mournfully from his weather-beaten countenance, a turban whose youthful brilliance had long merged itself in shades of green and grey, a brown coat, baggy trousers of faded blue, and a loin-cloth originally crimson, now russet and purple: I can see him now, if I shut my eyes, padding along the road in aged sandals of sheepskin, his legs encased in white cloths bound with brown and black leather thongs eked out with string, a forlorn figure, seldom speaking except to his bullocks, apparently sunk deep in meditation, but really always on

the alert to find the best path for his cattle, and never too far from the roadside to see a hole in the track and to return with silent footfall to lead his beasts, by the slender cord round their necks, safely past the pitfall into the comparative safety beyond. Poor "Turkey," the Bulgarians treated him with cheery contempt, and he led a solitary life among the crowd of drivers; but we found that the deep melancholy of his face could be lightened, and his mournful mouth could even smile, if he were offered that joy of Eastern lips, a cigarette. The only word common to him and to ourselves was "Tuka" (here), but it was wonderful what could be done by that one word: if we called "Tuka," he came; if we wanted a bundle put in or out of the cart, we pointed to the baggage, then to its desired resting-place, and "Tuka" completed the order! And he also conversed with us by means of "Tuka." We might hear, as it were, a cat scrambling in the depths of the waggon behind us, and turning we would see the back of Turkey's coat, or perhaps catch a glimpse of the blue trousers, while later the rest of him would emerge, sadly triumphant, with a loaf of bread, half a cheese, or a few onions, which he would wave gracefully towards us with "Tuka," as he silently disappeared from the cart with a soft rustle of the matting roof and a gentle thud as he dropped to the ground.

Some of the drivers were really inconsiderate in the way they arranged their own possessions and had to dig them out when their passengers were asleep, and one or two looked upon all rugs and blankets as common property, and were seen comfortably sleeping on the same while the inmates of the cart were taking a walk! But Turkey was a jewel, never there when not wanted, always at hand when we called, soft-footed and quiet as a creature of the woods, faithful as a dog, and as responsive to kind words (even one word!) and looks. Some weeks after our arrival in Kirk Kilisse, and consequent parting from our cart and driver, we were walking outside the town, when suddenly, from among a long convoy of bullock-waggons, we saw a figure detach itself and stand waving its arms and crying out something in an unknown tongue. There was such a smile all over his face that for a moment I failed to recognise him, but only for a moment! Of course it was Turkey, hailing us, no doubt, as his father and his mother, and inquiring after the welfare of ourselves and all our friends and relations. We could not talk much, but we shook hands and all laughed together before we parted, and after this we used to look out for our Turk in all the long lines of transport waggons, but we never saw him again, so our last memory of him remains as an unexpected shout of welcome in what was still to us a land of strangers.

Our second "Turkey" was a wounded prisoner who walked into the hospital one day among a detachment of Bulgarian wounded. He was a grim youth, with a furtive look, and, mindful of the secreted knife in a Tchataldja hospital which brought death to the medical attendant of one Turkish prisoner, we asked our interpreters (two strong young men) to be good enough to undress the Turk, in case he overpowered the nurses. The alarming patient was put in a corner bed in a crowded room. Promptly the man in the next bed, who had a badly wounded leg, leapt up and sprang to the opposite corner of the room! Fortunately we found among the other patients a calm and reasonable person who was quite willing to occupy the bed next the Turkish Terror, and the ward settled down peacefully for the night. In a few days the furtive look and the grimness had vanished, and a droll boyish face looked at us from Turkey's corner. Poor lad, like the rest of the Turkish army, he had been warned that if any wounded prisoner were not killed at once by his Bulgarian captors he would assuredly be either stabbed or poisoned as soon as he arrived at a hospital! In the hospital at Yambol we had seen orderlies tasting the food in presence of the Turkish patients before giving it to them, and we now saw how real was the fear instilled into their minds. We heard of a wounded Turk in another hospital who begged his doctor not to keep him in suspense any longer but to "do it at once." "Do what?" asked the doctor. "Why, kill me, of course," said the poor fellow; "I know it has to come, and this waiting is far worse!"

Our Turk soon became one of the hospital pets; he was only nineteen, a merry young tinker of Constantinople, and his neighbour, who, as we afterwards learned, was a schoolmaster, befriended him so kindly and instructed him with such zeal that on leaving the hospital to go to Sofia Turkey was heard announcing that when he was set free from the prison hospital he was not going back to Constantinople—not he, Bulgaria was now his country and Ferdinand his King!

And the third Turk?

Into the cholera tents of the First Field Hospital at Usún Keupru one day was admitted an emaciated Turk from Adrianople. "What is your name?" the doctor asked, and a feeble voice replied, "Ali Mústafa, at least, a few weeks ago they baptised me and said I was Georgi, but still — Ali Mústafa."

Poor Ali Mústafa, starvation at Adrianople was an ill preparation for an attack of cholera! In a few days he left the hospital tent to join the lone little company in the graves on the hillside, and surely St Peter was kind to him, even if Christian Georgi insisted that he was "still—Ali Mústafa."

E. J. Ramsbotham, M.B., B.S.
(Mrs S. X. Pantcheva).

A NEW METHOD WITH THE DRY FLY.

AMONG the things most apt to be forgotten by the angler with the dry fly is the fact that the reason of reasons why the trout will frequently decline to accept the feathered lure which is offered him by way of a satisfactory simulacrum of the natural insect is the unfortunate circumstance of the gut cast attached to it. Of course this is a proposition which is perfectly self-evident directly it is stated: it is a truism of which every fisher has always been fully aware in theory, but which not one single angler, even among the most highly proficient in his craft, out of ten thousand, appears to have appreciated so thoroughly as to set himself deliberately to meet it with any practical solution of the difficulty which it suggests. I have been privileged to study with close attention the performance of many of the most proficient in this fine mystery; I have discussed the methods, with competent critics, of those whom I have not had the fortune to see; I have read with diligence I believe all the many books on the great subject which ancient and modern wisdom has given for our instruction, yet in not a single one of these works of erudition, and in the method of presenting the fly to the fish of only one of those past-masters, have I been able to find so much as an attempt at a practical solution of this the most important of all the many problems of the angling art—the presentation of the fly to the fish in such a way that the fly only, or the fly first and the gut merely as a subsequent apparition, shall be proffered to the trout's notice.

Of course it is a problem which we all endeavour to solve, in our practice, when it is a question of fishing at all across the stream. If the angler and trout are in this relative position, the former will always make it his effort to cast in such a way that the fly at the end of the cast shall pitch on the water a foot or two above the nose of the fish, in order that it may float down over him, and that all the gut cast and the rest of the attachments shall be on the hither side, so to say, of the fish—between the fish and the angler. In this case it is to be hoped that the trout will apply his attention to the fly and will take no notice of the gut which, lying across the stream, does not so float as to come over his head. But all, I think, of the great masters of the art will tell you that this throwing across to a trout is not suggestive of the ideally best position for the angler. Directly behind the fish, that is to say, directly down-stream from him, is the vantage-point that they would wish to occupy from which to issue their invitations to him. As Mr Halford writes, if an angler can

find a fish steadily rising under his own bank, that fish is in the most ideal position for capture. If the stream is so shallow and the bed so firm that you can wade in, it may be possible to get thus directly behind a fish feeding out in the middle of the river also, and by so doing you usually gain the vast advantage of obviating the very probable necessity of throwing across a current moving at a different pace from that of the piece of water in which the fish is lying, and thus eliminate most of the chances of that drag of the fly, causing a little wake in the water to follow it, which makes trout rising in certain places almost impossible to delude.

And now it appears to me that having reached this point and having introduced the great name of Mr Halford,[1] I owe a profound apology to the reader for the presumption and the greatness of the claim that I am here making. For the claim, evidently, is no less than this, that I have something to say which is new in regard to this oft-discussed matter of the best way possible of the presentation of the fly to the fish — something that has not yet been said in the many books of Mr Halford and of all the other pundits. It is to be confessed that the claim is no less an one than this. My hope, however, is to make justification of the claim, rather than apology for it—for, after all, it is not to be supposed that either Mr Halford or any other of the writers who have done so very much in the way of teaching us how to angle scientifically for that most sophisticated of fish in all the world, the trout of the chalk streams, would imagine that, even so, they had said the last word on their science. Such a presumption as that would be a limitation of the variety and interest of the very science itself, which we all confess to be infinite in its variety. All have contributed their quota, and doubtless their craft will continue to develop, while trout grow more shy and men grow more practised, as long as fish swim in the rivers and men walk on the land. But now, in order that I may not appear too certainly to be ranging myself among those persons who rush in on ground too sacred even for the celestials, let me say hastily that I should not have ventured to write one word of this had I not received inspiration from what I have seen of the work of one angler, whom I believe to be pre-eminent over all the many others who are now engaged, at the season of the year, in that most delicate business of beguiling to the hook the trout of the chalk streams. I do not care, without particular permission, to give his name to the public, but there are many who pursue this art on the rivers of the South who will put a name to him at once, without

[1] It is only since the writing of this essay that the lamented death has happened of this past-master of the angling art.—H. G. H.

a moment's hesitation, by virtue of the indication above given. In the opinion of all those who know his skill as an angler, and with whom I have ever discussed the question, he is not only better than any other man at the art, but is even in a class entirely by himself. As I put it to a friend who told me he had lately been watching, on the Itchen, the angling of one reputed great master whom I did not happen to have seen at work, — "I suppose G——," naming him whom I piously believe to be the greatest of all, "could give him a stroke a hole, could he not?" "Two strokes a hole, I should think, from what I have seen of the two," was the reply, delivered with a fervour that bespoke full conviction. It is, therefore, on no unsupported personal opinion that I claim so much for this most remarkable fisher, and the records of a certain book belonging to a certain fishing club, records extending over many years, prove the claim to demonstration that we have, in this angler, one who, in the words of a gillie regarding him, "catches fish when no one else can catch them," and who catches more fish than any one else when others are catching them too. Set this man down, with any other you may name, on a river equally well known to the two of them, and at the end of a week's fishing, presuming that to be a sufficient period to eliminate the luck of finding fish rising on one beat and not on another, it is my conviction that he would be certain to have killed twenty-five per cent more weight of fish, using virtually the same flies, than the other, and I should be surprised if his advantage were not nearer fifty than twenty-five per cent. It is impossible to suppose that one man would achieve so much greater things than all others simply by a superior delicacy and accuracy in the placing of the fly. It suggests very forcibly that he has some method, some secret, which he has made, and in some measure has kept, his own; and it is, as I hope, by the revelation of that method, or of so much of it as I believe I understand, that I shall justify the large claim lately made. Mention of "keeping of a secret" might be thought to imply an idea, not quite sportsmanlike, of a selfish hugging of an advantage over others. Any such ursine behaviour is as far remote as could be from the disposition of this best of anglers, which is of a modesty that makes him most reluctant to speak of his own doings and methods. He is not of our noble army of scribblers, and it is with difficulty that he can be induced to admit that his skill is at all superior to that of any other. "I happened to be lucky in finding the fish rising," is his usual apology for a day's bag a cent per cent heavier than that of the next man. It is only with the greatest difficulty that he can be induced to admit any

superiority in his skill or any difference in his method. But his method is different, and I will endeavour to make explanation of it.

It may be as well to say, thus early, that if a student of the gentle art of fishing with the dry fly is to take any practical advantage of the inferences to be drawn from the practice of this great master, we must presume him to have passed the first standards, as we may call them, those very early stages of his education in which his attention is concentrated on the work of getting the fly out by any means he can. We must suppose him to have passed that point at which it ceases to be necessary for him to work laboriously at his overhand casting, and to have acquired the necessary art of horizontal casting, either forward as well as back-handed with the right hand, or forward with both hands ambidexterously. And I may say this for the comfort of those who, like myself, are utterly incapable of executing anything like a useful cast with the left hand, that this best of all fishers is equally useless with his left hand, and does all the work which ambidexterity would perform with the left hand by means of the back-hand cast with the right. Nor can I see that anything of value is lost by it. Now and again it may happen that a trout is lying in a place where a long reach out with the left hand, while the right hand has grip of a supporting tree on the bank, may get a rise for an ambidexterous fisher where a back-handed throw with the right could not reach to the fish; but these places are rare, and as a rule, that has few exceptions, the back-hand cast with the right, if well done, can pitch the fly where it needs to go in order to reach the most elusive fish. That the fly, however thrown, will float over the fish just like the natural insect, does not by any means follow, no matter by which of the two modes it is cast there.

The secret, then, in brief, which this wonderful angler possesses—to the exclusion of all the rest, to the best of my knowledge, of the angling world—is that of presenting the fly to the fish with such a curl at the end of the gut that the fly only, and the gut not at all, comes floating down over the fish's head. Standing or crouching directly behind the fish, whether wading in the stream or kneeling on the bank, he is able to do this, and is able to do it either fore-handed or back. That means to say, that if he is fishing on the proper right[1] bank of a stream, so that he will naturally cast fore-handed with his right hand to a rising fish, he will be kneeling on the bank, or perhaps have the left knee on the bank and the right foot down in the water, and will

[1] By "proper right," I mean on the right hand of a man facing down-stream. —H. G. H.

essay to beguile this fish to its death in the following way. With rod held low over the water, he will execute the horizontal cast, fore-handed, making the line travel, in the forward part of the cast, very nearly in the true horizontal plane, parallel with the surface of the water. Then, just before the line and cast have gone out straight, while there is yet a considerable curve, convex towards the bank, in the line, he will arrest the movement and hold the rod rigid. That means that the following movement is imparted to the final end of the cast and the fly that terminates it:—it is arrested, with a sudden stop, almost a jerk, as it is coming round to straighten itself out, and the effect of that is to give it a little sharp flick round towards the left. That is really the final moment of the cast: the cast is completed; but of course there is a moment yet before it all—fly, gut, and line—comes on the water, the moment, namely, that it takes the force of gravity to bring down the line and the rest of the arrangements to fall lightly on the stream. And you see what the result of it is, so far as the fish is concerned, if the final curve of the gut towards the left has been nicely calculated and the whole throw has been correctly performed—that the fly lands a foot or a foot and a half, whatever distance, in the pace of the stream, may seem to be best, above the trout's head, but that no part of the gut is directly in front of its nose. All the gut will lie on the right of the trout, and will come floating down to its side. The fly alone will pass over its head.

Does this sound something of a *tour de force* or conjuring trick? To those to whom it comes as a new project it is possible that it may so sound, but as a matter of fact it is not altogether so difficult of achievement as may be thought. Far indeed be it from me to pose as having at all conquered its difficulties. Now and again, after much practice, I am able to achieve the throw correctly, to put the fly, and the fly only, to sail over the fish's head; and when this happy event does come off, it is wonderful how seldom a seriously feeding fish seems able to decline the invitation, of course on the assumption that the stream is flowing so as not to put any drag on the fly. But when you can get right behind your fish it is not often that this fatal drag occurs. The real expert should be able to accomplish this little curve of the gut at the end—it is something in the form of a note of interrogation that the cast should fall—equally with the back-handed as with the fore-handed throw, for then he can terminate his invitation to the fish with the correct note of interrogation (only turned the other way round), equally deftly whether it lie under the one bank or the other of the stream. Or it may be, if he is an ambidexterous artist, that he will, on occasion, shift the rod to his left hand and cast the curving tail of gut in that way.

Anything like a moderate breeze of wind seems to make this cast, as is only likely, far more difficult to execute. If the wind be across stream, it either flicks the curve back or brings too much of the gut round, according to the direction of the wind in relation to the direction of the curve. If the wind be straight, and at all strong, behind, it is difficult to avoid its straightening out the curve, and if the wind be down stream it is hard to get the cast to pitch on the water lightly and yet not to have its end blown back on itself.

As for the mode of execution of the throw, I have endeavoured to give an idea of it above. By way of amplifying that suggestion, be it said in the first place that possibly enough there are as many ways of achieving it as there are "of making tribal lays," and very likely "every single one of them is right"; but the way which seems effective, so far as my humble efforts at the stroke go to teach me, is to make the line travel fairly quickly before the moment of arrest. Of course the pace and the power of any throw are determined not by the amount of force that your muscles put into it, but only by the amount of that force which they communicate to the steely-springing rod. It is the flick of the rod that communicates the movement to the line, and that flick does not give its full effect unless it is imparted at the moment when the line is at the right degree of extension backward. All this is of the grammar of the art of casting, and it is supposed that the student of this, the "interrogation note" cast, will have passed the standards of the first grammar.

It is necessary that there should be a certain pace of travel given to the line by the flick, in order that all its force shall not be spent by the moment of arrest, but that there shall be still sufficient to carry the end of the cast, with the fly, round in its curve. Nor does it in the least follow that the fly and the gut shall not fall with perfect lightness on the water, because they have been travelling at a tolerable speed shortly before alighting. They do not alight with anything like the force of their travel: it is a force which does not, in fact, affect the mode of their alighting, because that force is checked, it is pulled up short, and the fly and the gut come on the water with only the gentle force of the gravity that causes them to fall from the height of a foot or so above the water's surface. For this reason it is a very useful cast to use in a wind of which the strength is not too excessive. The line can be sent out at a pace which defeats the action of a moderate current of air, and yet the gut will fall lightly on the water. The problem is to induce it to alight before the wind has caught it and sent it erratically.

It hardly needs to be emphasised how much greater is the chance of deceiving a fish by means of a lure thus presented than of the most lightly thrown fly offered in the usual way,

for this usual mode implies that a portion of gut shall of necessity pass over the fish's head before the fly comes within its range, and though the wonder is rather that the trout endure the sight of the gut at all than that they are sometimes scared by it, it is quite certain that many a fish which does not at once dart off when it sees the gut may still be made watchful and suspicious. He may even continue to rise, though in a less confident way than before, at the natural fly, and be making so careful an inspection of each insect as it comes to him, before accepting it, that there is very little chance of his making any mistake when the imitation comes to his notice. There is very much less probability of throwing him into this state of morbid watchfulness if the fly be presented to him with such a curve at the end of the cast that the fly only and none of the gut comes over his head.

There is a further point that is worth mentioning in commending this throw to the dry-fly fisher. He will know, of his past experience, that if a fish comes away from his position to the distance of six inches or a foot—he is not likely to move further, unless it be to drop down-stream as the fly comes over him, examining it, in which case he is always a difficult fish to strike if he does finally elect to sample the fly—if the fish moves right or left to seize an artificial fly it means that he has fully made up his mind to have it, and is far more likely to take a good hold of the fly and to let the hook take a good hold of him, than the fish which merely sucks it in as it passes straight above his head. It is, in fact, almost to be taken as a maxim that the further you can induce the fish to come to your fly the more likely you are to hook him. And that being so, it is evident that you have not done yourself much harm in relation to the fish—have not, to any appreciable extent, spoilt your chance of catching him—if you happen, throwing thus with the cast curving towards the left, to pitch the fly a little outside him, a little to his right. If it sails down say six inches to the right of him, and he does not come for it, no damage has been done. The gut and all the rest of the line of invitation is lying yet further away to his right, and he is little likely to take notice of it; and if, on the other hand, he does observe your fly and think it worth his while to travel this half foot or so to taste it, there is all the greater probability of your tasting him, a little later in the day, at table than there would have been if your fly had been cast so as to pass exactly over him. There is thus this added point to be scored in this cast's favour, that if not exactly achieved at the first or second time of asking, the trout is far more likely to accept a third or subsequent invitation than if each proffer has been accompanied with some of the gut passed over him for inspection.

The essential for the correct performance of this cast, which

is really not so subtle an affair as it is bound to appear in the description, is, as I suppose in every other, that the timing shall be accurate. The line must be sent forward with just force enough, and no more, nicely proportioned to the length of line that is being used, to take it out quickly, yet not too quickly, to the required distance. If the pace be not enough, or again if it be too much, then, when the check is put on, the end of the cast fails to come curving round to make its note of interrogation. On the other hand, if the force is calculated nicely it is most satisfactory to see the right termination placed to the all-important question which you are asking the fish — that invitation to dinner which has to be put so exactly in the form in which he likes it if it is to win his acceptance. And the fly is not in any real sense thrown on the water. It is thrown out, thrown with a considerable speed and power; but then it is to be arrested. It is to be arrested just high enough above the water's surface to allow the fly and the end of the cast to have time to make the curve, and then to fall, without any force imparted from the thrower's arm at all, just as lightly as if they had been carefully laid there by his hand.

You may believe one who has, with infinite pains and with very moderate success, endeavoured to acquire the art of this most subtle and delicate throw, that it is an endeavour which adds immensely to the interest of dry-fly fishing, and that even its very imperfect acquirement adds more than a few to the fish that you may expect to catch with the dry fly.

HORACE HUTCHINSON.

"SCALLY."

THE STORY OF A PERFECT GENTLEMAN.

BY IAN HAY.

"BETTERSEA Trem? Right, Miss!"

My wife, who has been married long enough to feel deeply gratified at being mistaken for a maiden lady, smiled seraphically at the conductor, and allowed herself to be hoisted up the steps of the majestic vehicle provided by a paternal County Council to convey passengers—at a loss to the ratepayers, I understand — from the Embankment to Battersea.

Presently we ground our way round a curve, and began to cross Westminster Bridge. The conductor, whose innate Cockney *bonhomie* his high official position had failed to eradicate, presented himself before us and collected our fares.

"What part of Bettersea did you require, sir?" he asked of me.

I coughed, and answered evasively—

"Oh, about the middle."

"We haven't been there before," added my wife, quite gratuitously.

The conductor smiled indulgently, and punched our tickets.

"I'll tell you when to get down," he said, and left us.

For some months we had been considering the question of buying a dog; and a good deal of our spare time—or perhaps I should say of my spare time, for a woman's time is naturally all her own — had been pleasantly occupied in discussing the matter. Having at length committed ourselves to the purchase of the animal, we proceeded to consider such details as breed, sex, and age. My wife vacillated between a bloodhound, because bloodhounds are so aristocratic in appearance, and a Pekinese, because they are *dernier cri*. (We like to be *dernier cri* even in Much Moreham.) Her younger sister Eileen, who spends a good deal of time with us, suggested an Old English sheep-dog, explaining that it would be company for my wife when I was away from home. I coldly recommended a mastiff. Our son John, aged three, upon being consulted, expressed a preference for twelve tigers in a box, and was not again invited to participate in the debate.

Finally we decided upon an Aberdeen terrier, of an age and sex to be settled by circumstances, and I was instructed to communicate with a gentleman in the North, who advertised in our morning paper that Aberdeen terriers were his speciality. In due course we received a reply. The advertiser recommended

two animals—namely, "Celtic Chief," aged four months, and "Scotia's Pride," aged one year. Pedigrees were enclosed, each about as complicated as the family tree of the House of Hapsburg; and the favour of an early reply was requested, as both dogs were being hotly bid for by an anonymous client in Constantinople. The price of "Celtic Chief" was twenty guineas; that of "Scotia's Pride," for reasons heavily underlined in the pedigree, was twenty-seven. The advertiser (who was an Aberdonian) added that these prices did not cover cost of carriage. We decided not to stand in the way of the gentleman in Constantinople, and having sent back the pedigrees by return of post, resumed the debate.

Finally Stella (my wife) said—

"We don't really want a dog with a pedigree. We only want something that will bark at beggars and be gentle with Baby. Why not go to the Home for Lost Dogs at Battersea? I believe you can get any dog you like there for five shillings. We will run up to town next Wednesday and see about it—and I might get some clothes as well."

Hence our presence on the tram.

Presently the conductor, who had kindly pointed out to us such objects of local interest as the River Thames and the Houses of Parliament, stopped the tram in a crowded thoroughfare and announced that we were in Battersea.

"Alight here," he announced facetiously, "for the 'Ome for Lost Dawgs!"

Guiltily realising that there is many a true word spoken in jest, we obeyed him, and the tram went rocking and whizzing out of sight.

We had eschewed a cab.

"When you are only going to pay five shillings for a dog," my wife had pointed out with convincing logic, "it is silly to go and pay perhaps another five shillings for a cab. It doubles the price of the dog at once. If we had been buying an expensive dog we might have taken a cab; but not for a five-shilling one."

"Now," I inquired briskly, "how are we going to find this place?"

"Haven't you any idea where it is?"

"No. I have a sort of vague notion that it is on an island in the middle of the river—called the Isle of Dogs, or Barking Reach, or something like that. However, I have no doubt——"

"Hadn't we better ask some one?" suggested Stella.

I demurred.

"If there is one thing I dislike," I said, "it is accosting total strangers and badgering them for information which they don't possess. Not that that will prevent them from giving it. If we start asking the way we shall find ourselves in Putney or Woolwich in no time!"

"Yes, dear," said Stella soothingly.

"Now I suggest——" My hand went to my pocket.

"No, darling," interposed my wife hastily; "*not* a map,

please!" (It is a curious psychological fact that women have a constitutional aversion to maps and railway time-tables. They would sooner consult a half-witted errand-boy or a deaf railway porter.) "Do not let us make a spectacle of ourselves in the public streets again! I have not yet forgotten the day when you tried to find the Crystal Palace. Besides, it will only blow away. Ask that dear little boy there. He is looking at us so wistfully." . . .

Yes, I admit it was criminal folly. A man who asks a London street-boy to be so kind as to direct him to a Home for Lost Dogs has only himself to thank for the consequences.

The wistful little boy smiled up at us. He had a pinched face and large eyes.

"Lost Dogs' 'Ome, sir?" he said courteously. "It's a good long way. Did you want to get there quick?"

"Yes."

"Then if I was you, sir," replied the infant, edging to the mouth of an alleyway, "I should bite a policeman!"

And with an ear-splitting yell, he vanished.

We walked on, hot-faced.

"Little wretch!" said Stella.

"We simply asked for it," I rejoined. "What are we going to do next?"

My question was answered in a most incredible fashion, for at this moment a man emerged from a shop on our right, and set off down the street before us. He wore a species of uniform, and emblazoned upon the front of his hat was the information that he was an official of the Battersea Home for Lost and Starving Dogs.

"Wait a minute, and I will ask him," I said, starting forward.

But my wife would not hear of it.

"Certainly not," she replied. "If we ask him he will simply offer to show us the way. Then we shall have to talk to him—about hydrophobia, and lethal chambers, and distemper—and it may be for miles. I simply couldn't *bear* it. We shall have to tip him, too. Let us follow him, quietly."

To those who have never attempted to track a fellow-creature surreptitiously through the streets of London on a hot day the feat may appear simple. It is in reality a most exhausting, dilatory, and humiliating exercise. Our difficulty lay not so much in keeping our friend in sight as in avoiding frequent and unexpected collisions with him. The general idea, as they say on field-days, was to keep about twenty yards behind him; but under certain circumstances distance has an uncanny habit of annihilating itself. The man himself was no hustler. Once or twice he stopped to light his pipe, or converse with a friend. During these interludes Stella and I loafed guiltily upon the pavement, pointing out to one another objects of local interest with the fatuous officiousness of people in the foreground of hotel advertisements. Occasionally he paused to contemplate the contents of a shop

window. We gazed industriously into the window next door. Our first window, I recollect, was an undertaker's, with ready-printed expressions of grief for sale upon white porcelain discs. We had time to read them all. The next was a butcher's. Here we stayed, perforce, so long that the proprietor, who was of the tribe which disposes of its wares almost entirely by personal canvass, came out into the street and endeavoured to sell us a bullock's heart.

Our quarry's next proceeding was to dive into a public-house.

We turned and surveyed one another.

"What are we to do now?" inquired my wife.

"Go inside too," I replied, with more enthusiasm than I had hitherto displayed. "At least I think I ought to. You can please yourself."

"I will not be left in the street," said Stella firmly. "We must just wait here together until he comes out."

"There may be another exit," I objected. "We had better go in. I shall take something, just to keep up appearances, and you must sit down in the Ladies' Bar, or the Snug, or whatever they call it."

"Certainly not!" said Stella.

We had arrived at this *impasse* when the man suddenly reappeared, wiping his mouth. Instantly and silently we fell in behind him.

For the first time the man appeared to notice our presence. He regarded us curiously, with a faint gleam of recognition in his eyes, and then set off down the street at a good round pace. We followed, panting. Once or twice he looked back over his shoulder—a little apprehensively, I thought. But we ploughed on.

"We ought to get there soon at this pace," I gasped. "Hallo, he's gone again!"

"He turned down to the right," said Stella excitedly.

The lust of the chase was fairly on us now. We swung eagerly round the corner into a quiet by-street. Our man was nowhere to be seen, and the street was almost empty.

"Come on!" said Stella. "He may have turned in somewhere."

We hurried down the street. Suddenly, warned by a newly awakened and primæval instinct, I looked back. We had overrun our quarry. He had just emerged from some hiding-place of his own, and was heading back towards the main street, looking fearfully over his shoulder.

Once more we were in full cry. . . .

For the next five minutes we practically ran—all three of us. The man was obviously frightened out of his wits, and kept making frenzied and spasmodic spurts, from which we surmised that he was getting to the end of his powers of endurance.

"If only we could overtake him," I said, hauling my exhausted spouse along by the arm, "we could explain that——"

"He's gone again!" exclaimed Stella.

She was right. The man had turned another corner. We followed him round, hot-foot, and found ourselves in a prim little *cul-de-sac*, with villas on either side. Across the end of the street ran a high wall, obviously screening a railway-track.

"We've got him!" I exclaimed, feeling as Moltke must have felt when he closed the circle at Sedan.

"But where is the Dogs' Home, dear?" inquired Stella.

The question was never answered, for at this moment the man ran up the steps of the fourth villa on the left and slipped a latchkey into the lock. The door closed behind him with a venomous snap, and we were left alone in the street, guideless and dogless.

A minute later the man appeared at the ground-floor window, accompanied by a female of commanding appearance. He pointed us out to her. Behind them, dimly, we could descry a white table-cloth, a tea-cosy, and covered dishes.

The commanding female, after a prolonged and withering glare, plucked a hairpin from her head and ostentatiously proceeded to skewer together the starchy white curtains which framed the window. Privacy secured, and the sanctity of the English home thus pointedly vindicated, she and her husband disappeared into the murky background, where they doubtless sat down to an excellent high tea.

Exhausted and discomfited, we drifted away.

"I am going home," said Stella in a hollow voice. "And I think," she added bitterly, "that it might have occurred to you to suggest that the creature might possibly be going *from* the Dogs' Home, and not to it."

I apologised. It is the simplest plan, really.

II

It was almost dark when the train arrived at our little country station. We set out to walk home by the short cut across the golf-course.

"Anyhow, we have saved five shillings," remarked Stella.

"We paid half-a-crown for that taxi which took us back to Victoria Station," I reminded her.

"Do not argue to-night, darling," responded my wife. "I simply cannot endure anything more."

Plainly she was a little unstrung. Very considerately I selected another topic.

"I think our best plan," I said cheerfully, "would be to advertise for a dog."

"I never wish to see a dog again," replied Stella.

I surveyed her with some concern, and said gently—

"I am afraid you are tired, dear."

"No, I'm not."

"A little shaken, perhaps?"

"Nothing of the kind. *Joe, what is that?*"

Stella's fingers bit deep into my biceps muscle, causing me considerable pain. We were passing a small sheet of water, which guards the thirteenth green on the golf-course. It is a stagnant and unclean pool, but we make rather a fuss of it. We call it the pond, and if you play a ball into it you send a blasphemous caddie in after it and count one stroke.

A young moon was struggling up over the trees, dismally illuminating the scene. Upon the slimy shores of the pond we beheld a small moving object. A yard behind it was another object, a little smaller, moving at exactly the same pace. One of the objects was emitting sounds of distress.

Abandoning my quaking consort, I advanced to the edge of the pond and leaned down to investigate the mystery.

The leading object proved to be a small, wet, shivering, whimpering puppy. The satellite was a brick. The two were connected by a string. The puppy had just emerged from the depths of the pond, towing the brick behind it.

"What is it, dear?" repeated Stella fearfully.

"Your dog!" I replied, and cut the string.

III.

We spent three days deciding upon a name for him. Stella suggested Tiny, on account of his size. I pointed out that time might stultify this selection of a title.

"I don't think so," said Eileen, supporting her sister. (She usually does.) "That kind of dog does not grow very big."

"What kind of dog is he?" I inquired swiftly.

Eileen said no more. There are problems which even young women of twenty cannot solve.

A warm bath had revealed to us the fact that the puppy was of a dingy yellow hue. I suggested that we should call him "Mustard." Our son John, on being consulted (against my advice) by his mother, addressed the animal as "Pussy." Stella continued to favour "Tiny." Finally Eileen, who was at the romantic age, produced a copy of Tennyson and suggested "Excalibur," alleging in support of her preposterous proposition that

It rose from out the bosom of the lake.

"The darling rose from out the bosom of the lake, too, just like the sword Excalibur," she said, "so I think it would make a lovely name for him."

"The little brute waded out of a muddy pond towing a brick," I replied. "I see no parallel. He was not the product of the pond. Some one must have thrown him in, and he came out."

"That is just," retorted Eileen, "what some one must have done with the sword. So

we'll call you Excalibur, won't we, darling little Scally?"

She embraced the puppy warmly, and the unsuspecting animal replied by frantically licking her face.

However, the name stuck—with variations. When the puppy was big enough he was presented with a collar engraved with the name "Excalibur," together with my name and address. Among ourselves we usually addressed him as "Scally." The children in the village called him "The Scallywag."

His time during his first year in our household was fully occupied in growing up. Stella declared that if one could have persuaded him to stand still for five minutes it would have been actually possible to see him grow. He grew at the rate of about an inch per week for the best part of a year. When he had finished he looked like nothing on earth. At one time we cherished a brief but illusory hope that he was going to turn into some sort of an imitation of a St Bernard; but the symptoms rapidly passed off, and his final and permanent aspect was that of a rather badly stuffed lion.

Like most overgrown creatures he was top-heavy and lethargic, and very humble-minded. Still, there was a kind of respectful pertinacity about him. It requires some strength of character, for instance, to wade along the bottom of a pond to dry land accompanied by a brick as big as yourself. It was quite impossible, too, short of locking him up, to prevent him from accompanying us when we took our walks abroad, if he had made up his mind to do so. The first time this happened I was going to shoot with some neighbours. It was only a mile to the first covert, and I set off after breakfast to walk. I was hardly out upon the road when Excalibur was beside me, ambling uncertainly upon his weedy legs and smiling up into my face with an air of imbecile affection.

"You have many qualities, old friend," I said, "but I don't think you are a sporting dog. Go home!"

Excalibur sat down upon the road with a dejected air. Then, having given me fifty yards' start, he rose and crawled sheepishly after me. I stopped, called him up, pointed him with some difficulty in the required direction, gave him a resounding spank, and bade him begone. He responded by collapsing like a camp bedstead, and I left him.

Two minutes later I looked round. Excalibur was ten yards behind me, propelling himself along upon his stomach. This time I thrashed him severely. After he had begun to howl I let him go, and he lumbered away homeward the picture of misery.

In due course I reached the cross-roads where I had arranged to meet the rest of the party. They had not arrived, but Excalibur had. He had made a detour, and headed me off. Not certain which route I would take after the cross-roads, he was sitting, very

sensibly, under the sign-post, awaiting my arrival. On seeing me he immediately came forward, wagging his tail, and placed himself at my feet in the position most convenient to me for inflicting chastisement.

I wonder how many of our human friends would be willing to pay such a price for the pleasure of our company.

As time went on Excalibur filled out into one of the most terrifying spectacles I have ever beheld. In one respect, though, he lived up to his knightly name. His manners were of the most courtly description, and he had an affectionate greeting for all—beggars included. He was particularly fond of children. If he saw children in the distance he would canter up and offer to play with them. If the children had not met him before they would run shrieking to their nurses. If they had, they would fall upon Excalibur in a body and roll him over and pull him about. On wet afternoons in the nursery my own family used to play at "dentist" with him, assigning to Excalibur the *rôle* of patient. Gas was administered with a bicycle-pump, and a shoehorn and button-hook were employed in place of the ordinary instruments of torture. But Excalibur did not mind. He lay on his back upon the hearthrug, with the principal dentist sitting astride his ribs, as happy as a king. He was particularly attracted by babies; and being able by reason of his stature to look right down into perambulators, was accustomed whenever he met one of these vehicles to amble alongside and peer inquiringly into the face of its occupant. Most of the babies in the district got to know him in time, but until they did we had a good deal of correspondence to attend to upon the subject.

Excalibur's intellect may have been lofty, but his memory was treacherous. Our household will never forget the day upon which he was given the shoulder of mutton.

One morning after breakfast Eileen, accompanied by Excalibur, intercepted the kitchen-maid hastening in the direction of the potting-shed, carrying the joint in question at arm's length. The damsel explained that its premature maturity was due to the recent warm weather, and that she was even now in search of the gardener's boy, who would be commissioned to perform the duties of sexton.

"It seems a waste, Miss," observed the kitchen-maid, "but Cook says it can't be ate nohow, now."

Loud but respectful snuffings from Excalibur moved a direct negative to this statement. Eileen and the kitchen-maid, who were both criminally weak where Excalibur was concerned, saw a way to gratify their economical instincts and their natural affection simultaneously. Next moment Excalibur was lurching contentedly down the gravel path, with a presentation shoulder of mutton in his mouth.

Then Joy Day began. Ex-

calibur took his prize into the middle of the tennis-lawn. It was a very large shoulder of mutton, but Excalibur finished it in ten minutes. After that, distended to his utmost limits, he went to sleep in the sun, with the bone between his paws. Occasionally he woke up, and raising his head stared solemnly into space, in the attitude of a Trafalgar Square lion. The bone now lay white and gleaming upon the grass beside him. Then he fell asleep again. About four o'clock he roused himself, and began to look for a suitable place of interment for the bone. By four-thirty the deed was done, and he went to sleep once more. At five he woke up—and pandemonium began. He could not remember where he had buried the bone!

He started systematically with the rose-beds, but met with no success. After that he tried two or three shrubberies, without avail; and then embarked upon a frantic but thorough excavation of the tennis-lawn. We were taking tea upon the lawn at the time, and our attention was first drawn to Excalibur's bereavement by a temporary but unshakable conviction on his part that the bone was buried immediately underneath the tea-table.

As the tennis-lawn was fast beginning to resemble a golf-course, we locked Excalibur up in the wash-house, where his hyena-like howls rent the air for the rest of the evening, penetrating even to the dining-room. This was particularly unfortunate, because we were having a dinner party in honour of a neighbour who had recently come to the district—no less a personage, in fact, than the new Lord-Lieutenant of the county and his lady. Stella was naturally anxious that there should be no embarrassments upon such an occasion, and it distressed her to think that these people should imagine that we kept a private torture-chamber on the premises.

However, dinner passed off quite successfully, and we adjourned to the drawing-room. It was a chilly September evening, and Lady Wickham was accommodated with a seat by the fire in a large arm-chair with a cushion at her back. When the gentlemen came in Eileen sang to us. Fortunately the drawing-room is out of range of the wash-house.

During Eileen's first song I sat by Lady Wickham. Her expression was one of patrician calm and well-bred repose, but it seemed to me that she was not looking quite comfortable. I was not feeling quite comfortable myself. The atmosphere seemed a trifle oppressive; perhaps we had done wrong in having a fire after all. Lady Wickham appeared to notice it too. She sat very upright, fanning herself mechanically, and seemed disinclined to lean back in her chair.

After the song was finished I said:

"I am afraid you are not quite comfortable, Lady Wickham. Let me get you a larger cushion."

"Thank you," said Lady Wickham; "the cushion I have is delightfully comfortable; but I think there is something hard behind it."

Apologetically, I plucked away the cushion. Lady Wickham was right; there was something behind it.

It was Excalibur's bone.

IV.

A walk along the village street was always a great event for Excalibur. Still, it must have contained many humiliating moments for one of his sensitive disposition; for he was always pathetically anxious to make friends with other dogs and was rarely successful. Little dogs merely bit his legs, while big dogs cut him dead.

I think this was why he usually commenced his morning round by calling on a rabbit. The rabbit lived in a hutch in a yard at the end of a passage between two cottages — the first turning on the right after you entered the village—and Excalibur always dived down this at the earliest opportunity. It was no use for Eileen (who usually took him out on these occasions) to endeavour to hold him back. Either Excalibur called on the rabbit by himself or Eileen went with him: there was no other alternative.

Arrived at the hutch, Excalibur wagged his tail and contemplated the rabbit with his usual air of vacuous benevolence. The rabbit made not the faintest response, but continued to munch green food, twitching its nose in a superior manner. Finally, when it could endure Excalibur's admiring inspection and hard breathing no longer, it turned its back and retired into its bedroom.

Excalibur's next call was usually at the butcher's, where he was presented with a specially selected and quite unsaleable fragment of meat. He then crossed the road to the baker's, where he purchased a halfpenny bun, for which his escort was expected to pay. After that he walked from shop to shop, wherever he was taken, with great docility and enjoyment; for he was a gregarious animal and had a friend behind or underneath almost every counter in the village. Men, women, babies, kittens, even ducks — they were all one to him.

At one time Eileen had endeavoured to teach him a few simple accomplishments, such as begging for food, dying for his country, and carrying parcels. She was unsuccessful in all three instances. Excalibur upon his hind legs stood about five feet six, and when he fell from that eminence, as he invariably did when he tried to beg, he usually broke something. He was hampered, too, by inability to distinguish one order from another. More than once he narrowly escaped with his life through mistaking an urgent appeal to come to heel, out of

the way of an approaching automobile, for a command to die for his country in the middle of the road. As for educating him to carry parcels, a single attempt was sufficient. The parcel in question contained a miscellaneous assortment of articles from the grocer's, including lard, soap, and safety matches. It was securely tied up, and the grocer kindly attached it by a short length of string to a wooden clothes-peg, in order to make it easier for Excalibur to carry. They set off home. . . .

Excalibur was most apologetic about it afterwards, besides being extremely unwell. But he had no idea, he explained to Eileen, that anything put into his mouth was not meant to be eaten. He then tendered the clothes-peg and some mangled brown paper with an air of profound abasement. After that no further attempts at compulsory education were undertaken.

But it was his daily walk with Eileen which introduced Excalibur to Life—Life in its broadest and most romantic sense. As I was not privileged to be present at the opening incident of this episode, or most of its subsequent developments, the direct conduct of this narrative here passes out of my hands.

One sunny morning in July a young man in clerical attire sat breakfasting in his rooms at Mrs Tice's. Mrs Tice's establishment was situated in the village street, and Mrs Tice was in the habit of letting her ground-floor to lodgers of impeccable respectability.

It was half-past eleven, which is a late hour for the clergy to breakfast, but this young man appeared to be suffering from no qualms of conscience upon the subject. He was making an excellent breakfast, and reading the Henley results from *The Sportsman* with a mixture of rapture and longing.

He had just removed *The Sportsman* from the convenient buttress of the teapot and substituted *Punch*, when he became aware that day had turned to night. Looking up, he perceived that his open window, which was rather small and of the casement variety, was completely blocked by a huge, shapeless, and opaque mass. Next moment the mass resolved itself into an animal of enormous size and surprising appearance, which fell heavily into the room, and—

"Like a stream that, spouting from a cliff,
Fails in mid-air; but gathering at the base,
Remakes itself,"

—rose to its feet, and, advancing to the table, laid a heavy head upon the white cloth, and lovingly passed its tongue (which resembled that of the great ant-eater) round a cold chicken conveniently adjacent.

Five minutes later the window framed another picture—this time a girl of twenty, white-clad, and wearing a powder-blue felt hat caught up on one side by a silver buckle, which twinkled in the hot morning sun. The Curate

started to his feet. Excalibur, who was now lying upon the hearthrug dismembering the chicken, thumped his tail guiltily upon the floor, but made no attempt to rise.

"I am very sorry," said Eileen, "but I am afraid my dog is trespassing. May I call him out?"

"Certainly," said the Curate. "But"—he racked his brains to devise some means of delaying the departure of this radiant, fragrant vision—"he is not the least in the way. I am very glad of his company: I think it was most neighbourly of him to call. After all, I suppose he is one of my parishioners? And — and" — he blushed painfully — "I hope you are, too."

Eileen gave him her most entrancing smile, and from that hour the Curate ceased to be his own master.

"I suppose you are Mr Gilmore," said Eileen.

"Yes. I have only been here three weeks, and I have not met every one yet."

"I have been away for two months," Eileen mentioned.

"I thought you must have been," said the Curate, rather subtly for him.

"I think my brother-in-law called upon you a few days ago," continued Eileen, upon whom the Curate's last remark had made a most favourable impression. She mentioned my name.

"I was going to return the call this very afternoon," said the Curate. And he firmly believed that he was speaking the truth. "Won't you come in? We have an excellent chaperon"—indicating Excalibur. "I will come and open the door."

"Well, he certainly won't come out unless I come and fetch him," admitted Eileen thoughtfully.

A moment later the Curate was at the front door, and led his visitor across the little hall into the sitting-room. He had not been absent more than thirty seconds, but during that time a plateful of sausages had mysteriously disappeared; and as they entered, Excalibur was apologetically settling down upon the hearthrug with a cottage loaf.

Eileen uttered cries of dismay and apology, but the Curate would have none of them.

"My fault entirely!" he insisted. "I have no right to be breakfasting at this hour. But this is my day off. I take early Service every morning at seven; but on Wednesdays we cut it ou—omit it, and have full Matins at ten. So I get up at half-past nine, take Service at ten, and come back at eleven and have breakfast. It is my weekly treat."

"You deserve it," said Eileen feelingly. Her religious exercises were limited to going to church on Sunday morning and coming out, if possible, after the litany. "And how do you like Much Moreham?"

"I did not like it at all when I came," said the Curate, "but recently I have begun to enjoy myself immensely." He did not say how recently.

"Were you in London before?"

"Yes—in the East End. It was pretty hard work, but a useful experience. I feel rather lost here during my spare time. I get so little exercise. In London I used to slip away for an occasional outing in a Leander scratch eight, and that kept me fit. I am inclined," he added ruefully, "to put on flesh."

"Leander? Are you a Blue?"

The Curate nodded.

"You know about rowing, I see," he said appreciatively. "The worst of rowing," he continued, "is that it takes up so much of a man's time that he has no opportunity of practising anything else. Cricket, for instance. All curates ought to be able to play cricket. I do my best, but there isn't a single boy in the Sunday-school who can't bowl me. It's humiliating!"

"Do you play tennis at all?" asked Eileen.

"Yes, in a way."

"I am sure my sister will be pleased if you will come and have a game with us one afternoon."

The enraptured Curate had already opened his mouth to accept this demure invitation, when Excalibur, rising from the hearthrug, stretched himself luxuriously and wagged his tail, thereby removing three pipes, an inkstand, a tobacco-jar, and a half-completed sermon from the writing-table.

V.

Excalibur was heavily overworked in his new *rôle* of chaperon during the next three or four weeks, and any dog less ready to oblige than himself might have felt a little aggrieved at the treatment to which he was subjected.

There was the case of the tennis-lawn, for instance. He had always regarded this as his own particular sanctuary, dedicated to reflection and repose. But now the net was stretched across it, and Eileen and the Curate performed antics all over the court with rackets and small white balls which, though they did not hurt Excalibur, kept him awake. It did not occur to him to convey himself elsewhere, for his mind moved slowly; and the united blandishments of the players failed to bring the desirability of such a course home to him. He continued to lie on his favourite spot upon the sunny side of the court, looking injured but forgiving, or slumbering perseveringly amid the storm that raged around him. It was quite impossible to move Excalibur once he had decided to remain where he was, so Eileen and the Curate agreed to regard him as a sort of artificial excrescence—like the buttress in a fives court. If the ball hit him—as it frequently did—the player waiting for it was at liberty either to play it or claim a let. This arrangement added a piquant and pleasing variety to what

is too often—especially when indulged in by mediocre players—a very dull game.

But worse was to follow. One day Eileen and the Curate conducted Excalibur to a neighbouring mountain-range—at least, so it appeared to Excalibur—and played another ball game. This time they employed long sticks with iron heads, and two balls, which, though they were much smaller than the tennis balls, were incredibly hard and painful. Excalibur, though willing to help and anxious to please, could not supervise both these balls at once. As sure as he ran to retrieve one the other came after him and took him unfairly in the rear. Excalibur was the gentlest of creatures, but the most perfect gentleman has his dignity to consider. After having been struck for the third time by one of these balls, he whipped round, picked it up in his mouth, and gave it a tiny pinch—just for a warning. At least, he thought it was a tiny pinch. The ball retaliated, with unexpected ferocity. It twisted and turned. It emitted long snaky spirals of some elastic substance, which clogged his teeth and tickled his throat and wound themselves round his tongue and nearly choked him. Panic-stricken, he ran to his mistress, who, with weeping and with laughter, removed the writhing horror from his jaws and comforted him with fair words.

After that Excalibur realised that it is wiser to walk behind golfers than in front of them. But it was a boring business, and very exhausting, for he loathed exercise of every kind; and his only periods of repose were the occasions upon which the expedition came to a halt on certain small flat lawns, each of which contained a hole with a flag in it. Here Excalibur would lie down with the contented sigh of a tired child, and go to sleep. As he almost invariably lay down between the hole and the ball, the players agreed to regard him as a bunker. Eileen putted round him; but the curate, who had little regard for the humbler works of creation, Excalibur thought, used to take his mashie and attempt a lofting shot — an enterprise in which he almost invariably failed, to Excalibur's great inconvenience.

Country walks were more tolerable, for Eileen's supervision of his movements, which was usually marked by an officious severity, was sensibly relaxed in these days; and Excalibur found himself at liberty to range abroad amid the heath and through the coppices, engaged in a pastime which he imagined was hunting.

One hot afternoon, wandering into a clearing, he encountered a hare. The hare, which was suffering from extreme panic owing to a terrifying noise behind it—the blast of the newest and most vulgar motor-horn, to be precise—was bolting right across the clearing. After the manner of hares where objects directly in front of them are concerned, the

fugitive entirely failed to perceive Excalibur, and indeed ran right underneath him on its way to cover. Excalibur was so unstrung by this adventure that he ran back to where he had left Eileen and the Curate.

They were sitting side by side upon the grass, and the Curate was holding Eileen's hand.

Excalibur advanced upon them thankfully, and indicated by an ingratiating smile that a friendly remark or other recognition of his presence would be gratefully received. But neither took the slightest notice of him. They continued to gaze straight before them, in a mournful and abstracted fashion. They looked not so much *at* Excalibur as *through* him. First the hare, then Eileen and the Curate! Excalibur began to fear that he had become invisible—or at least transparent. Greatly agitated, he drifted away into a neighbouring plantation, full of young pheasants. Here he encountered a keeper, who was able to dissipate his gloomy suspicions for him without any difficulty whatsoever.

But Eileen and the Curate sat on.

"A hundred pounds a year!" repeated the Curate. "A pass degree, and no influence! I can't preach, and I have no money of my own. Dearest, I ought never to have told you."

"Told me what?" inquired Eileen softly. She knew quite well, but she was a woman; and a woman can never let well alone.

The Curate, turning to Eileen, delivered himself of a statement of three words. Eileen's reply was a whispered *tu quoque.*

"It had to happen, dear," she added cheerfully, for she did not share the Curate's burden of responsibility in the matter. "If you had not told me, we should have been miserable separately. Now that you have told me, we can be miserable together. And when two people who—who——" She hesitated.

The Curate supplied the relative sentence. Eileen nodded her head in acknowledgment.

"Yes; who are—like you and me, are miserable together, they are happy! See?"

"I see," said the Curate gravely. "Yes, you are right there. But we can't go on living on a diet of joint misery. We shall have to face the future. What are we going to do about it?"

Then Eileen spoke up boldly for the first time.

"Gerald," she said, "we shall simply have to manage on a hundred a year."

But the Curate shook his head.

"Dearest, I should be an utter cad if I allowed you to do such a thing," he said. "A hundred a year is less than two pounds a week."

"A lot of people live on less than two pounds a week," Eileen pointed out longingly.

"Yes, I know. If we could rent a three-shilling cottage, and I could go about with a spotted handkerchief round my neck, and you could scrub the doorstep, *coram populo*, we

might be very comfortable. But the clergy belong to the black-coated class, and people in the lower ranks of the black-coated class are the poorest people in the whole wide world. They have to spend money on luxuries—collars, and charwomen, and so on—which a working man can spend entirely on necessities. It wouldn't merely mean no pretty dresses and a lot of hard work for you, Eileen. It would mean *starvation!* Believe me, I know! Some of my friends have tried it, and I know!"

"What happened to them?" asked Eileen fearfully.

"They all had to come down in the end—some soon, some late, but all in time—to taking parish relief."

"Parish relief?"

"Yes. Not official, regulation, rate-aided charity, but the infinitely more humiliating charity of their well-to-do neighbours. Quiet cheques, second-hand dresses, and things like that. No, little girl, you and I are too proud—too proud of the cloth—for that. We will never give a handle to the people who are always waiting to have a fling at the improvident clergy—not if it breaks our hearts, we won't!"

"You are quite right, dear," said Eileen quietly. "We must wait."

Then the Curate said the most difficult thing he had said yet.

"I shall have to go away from here."

Eileen's hand turned cold in his.

"Why?" she whispered; but she knew.

"Because if we wait here, we shall wait for ever. The last curate in Much Moreham—what happened to him?"

"He died."

"Yes—at fifty-five; and he had been here for thirty years. Preferment does not come in sleepy villages. I must go back to London."

"The East End?"

"East or South or North—it doesn't signify. Anywhere but West. In the East and South and North there is always work to be done—hard work. And if a parson has no money and no brains and no influence, and can only work—run clothing-clubs and soup-kitchens, and reclaim drunkards—London is the place for him. So off I go to London, my beloved, to lay the foundations of Paradise for you and me—for you and me!"

There was a long silence. Then the pair rose to their feet, and smiled upon one another extremely cheerfully, because each suspected the other (rightly) of low spirits.

"Shall we tell people?" asked the Curate.

Eileen thought, and shook her head.

"No," she said. "Nicer not. It will make a splendid secret."

"Just between us two—eh?" said the Curate, kindling at the thought.

"Just between us two," agreed Eileen. And the Curate kissed her, very solemnly. A secret is a comfortable thing to lovers, especially when they are young and about to be lonely.

At this moment a leonine head, supported upon a lumbering and ill-balanced body, was thrust in between them. It was Excalibur, taking sanctuary with the Church from the vengeance of the Law.

"We might tell Scally, I think," said Eileen.

"Rather!" assented the Curate. "He introduced us."

So Eileen communicated the great news to Excalibur.

"You do approve, dear, don't you?" she said.

Excalibur, instinctively realising that this was an occasion upon which liberties might be taken, stood upon his hind legs and placed his fore-paws on his mistress's shoulders. The Curate supported them both.

"And you will use your influence to get us a living wage from somewhere, won't you, old man?" added the Curate.

Excalibur tried to lick both their faces at once — and succeeded.

VI.

So the Curate went away, but not to London. He was sent instead to a great manufacturing town in the North, where the work was equally hard, and where Anglican and Roman and Salvationist fought grimly side by side against the powers of drink and disease and crime. During these days, which ultimately rolled into years, the Curate lost his boyish freshness and his unfortunate tendency to put on flesh. He grew thin and lathy; and although his smile was as ready and as magnetic as ever, he seldom laughed.

But he never failed to write a cheerful letter to Eileen every Monday morning. He was getting a hundred and twenty pounds a year now, so his chances of becoming a millionaire had increased by twenty per cent.

Meanwhile his two confederates, Excalibur and Eileen, continued to reside at Much Moreham. Eileen was still the recognised beauty of the district, but she spread her net less promiscuously than of yore. Girl friends she always had in plenty, but it was noticed that she avoided intimacy with all eligible males of over twenty and under forty-five years of age. No one knew the reason of this, except Excalibur. Eileen used to read Gerald's letters aloud to him every Tuesday morning: sometimes the letter contained a friendly message to Excalibur himself. In acknowledgment of this courtesy Excalibur always sent his love to the Curate — Eileen wrote every Friday — and he and Eileen walked together, rain or shine, on Friday afternoons to post the letter in the next village. Much Moreham post-office was too small to remain oblivious to such a regular correspondence.

But the Curate was seen no more in his old parish. Railway journeys are costly things,

and curates' holidays rare. Besides, he had no overt excuse for coming. And so life went on for five years. The Curate and Eileen may have met during that period, for Eileen sometimes went away visiting; and as Excalibur was not privileged to accompany her upon these occasions he had no means of checking her movements. But the chances are that she never saw the Curate, or I think she would have told Excalibur about it. We simply have to tell some one.

Then, quite suddenly, came a tremendous change in Excalibur's life. Eileen's brother-in-law — he was Excalibur's master no longer, for Excalibur had been transferred to Eileen by deed of gift, at her own request, on her first birthday after the Curate's departure— fell ill. There was an operation, and a crisis, and a deal of unhappiness at Much Moreham: then came convalescence, followed by directions for a sea voyage of six months. It was arranged that the house should be shut up, and the children sent to their grandmother at Bath.

"That settles everything and everybody," said the gaunt man on the sofa, "except you, Eileen. What about you?"

"What about Scally?" inquired Eileen.

Her brother-in-law apologetically admitted that he had forgotten Scally.

"Not quite myself at present," he mentioned in extenuation.

"I am going to Aunt Phœbe," announced Eileen.

"You are never going to introduce Scally into Aunt Phœbe's establishment!" cried Eileen's sister.

"No," said Eileen, "I am not." She rubbed Excalibur's matted head affectionately. "But I have arranged for the dear man's future. He is going to visit friends in the North. Aren't you, darling?"

Excalibur, to whom this arrangement had been privately communicated some days before, wagged his tail and endeavoured to look as intelligent and knowing as possible. He was not going to put his beloved mistress to shame by admitting to her relatives that he had not the faintest idea what she was talking about.

However, he was soon to understand. Next day Eileen took him up to London by train. This in itself was a tremendous adventure, though alarming at first. He travelled in the guard's van, it having been found quite impossible to get him into an ordinary compartment — or rather, to get any one else into the compartment after he had lain down upon the floor. So he travelled with the guard, chained to the vacuum brake, and shared that kindly official's dinner.

When they reached the terminus there was much bustle and confusion. The door of the van was thrown open, and porters dragged out the luggage and submitted samples thereof to overheated passengers, who invariably failed to recognise their own property and claimed some

one else's. Finally, when the luggage was all cleared out, the guard took off Excalibur's chain and facetiously invited him to alight here for London town. Excalibur, lumbering delicately across the ribbed floor of the van, arrived at the open doorway. Outside upon the platform he espied Eileen. Beside her stood a tall figure in black.

With one tremendous roar of rapturous recognition, Excalibur leaped straight out of the van and launched himself fairly and squarely at the Curate's chest. Luckily the Curate saw him coming.

"He knows you all right," said Eileen with satisfaction.

"He appears to," replied the Curate. "Afraid I don't dance the tango, Scally, old man. But thanks for the invitation, all the same!"

Excalibur spent the rest of the day in London, where it must be admitted that he caused a genuine sensation—no mean feat in such a *blasé* place. In Bond Street the traffic had to be held up both ways by benevolent policemen, because Excalibur, feeling pleasantly tired, lay down to rest.

When evening came they all dined together in a cheap little restaurant in Soho, and were very gay—with the gaiety of people who are whistling to keep their courage up. After dinner Eileen said good-bye, first to Excalibur and then to the Curate. She was much more demonstrative towards the former than the latter, which is the way of women. Then the Curate put Eileen into a taxi, and having, with the aid of the commissionaire, extracted Excalibur from underneath — he had gone there under some confused impression that it was the guard's van again—said good-bye for the last time; and Eileen, smiling bravely, was whirled away out of sight.

As the taxi turned a distant corner and disappeared from view, it suddenly occurred to Excalibur that he had been left behind. Accordingly he set off in pursuit. . . .

The Curate finally ran him to earth in Buckingham Palace Road, which is a long chase from Soho, sitting upon the pavement, to the grave inconvenience of the inhabitants of Pimlico, and refusing to be comforted. It took his new master the best part of an hour to get him to the Euston Road, where it was discovered that they had missed the night mail to the North. Accordingly they walked to a rival station and took another train.

In all this Excalibur was the instrument of Destiny, as you shall hear.

VII.

The Coroner's Jury were inclined at the time to blame the signalman, but the Board of Trade Inquiry established the fact that the accident was due to the driver's neglect to

keep a proper look-out. However, as the driver was dead, and his fireman with him, the Law very leniently took no further action in the matter.

About three o'clock in the morning, as the train was crossing a bleak Yorkshire moor seven miles from Tetley Junction, the Curate suddenly left the seat upon which he lay stretched, dreaming of Eileen, and flew across the compartment on to the recumbent form of a stout commercial traveller. Then he rebounded on to the floor, and woke up—unhurt.

"'Tis a accident, lad!" gasped the commercial traveller, as he got his wind back.

"So it seems," said the Curate. "Hold tight! She's rocking!"

The commercial traveller, who was mechanically groping under the seat for his boots — commercial travellers always remove their boots in third-class railway compartments upon night journeys—followed the Curate's advice, and braced himself with feet against the opposite seat for the coming *bouleversement.*

After the first shock the train had gathered way again —the light engine into which it had charged had been thrown clean off the track,—but only for a moment. Suddenly the reeling engine of the express left the metals and staggered drunkenly along the ballast. A moment later it turned right over, taking the guard's van and the first four coaches with it, and the whole train came to a standstill.

It was a corridor train; and unfortunately for Gerald Gilmore and the commercial traveller, their coach fell over corridor side downwards. There was no door upon the other side of the compartment—only three windows, crossed by a stout brass bar. These windows had suddenly become skylights.

They fought their way out at last. Once he had got the window open the Curate experienced little difficulty in getting through; but the commercial traveller was corpulent and tenacious of his boots, which he held persistently in one hand while Gerald tugged at the other. Still he was hauled up at last, and the two slid down the perpendicular roof of the coach on to the permanent way.

"That's done, anyway," panted the bagman, and sitting down he began to put on his boots.

"There's plenty more to do," said the Curate grimly, pulling off his coat. "The front of the train is on fire. Come!"

He turned and ran. Almost at his first step he cannoned into a heavy body in rapid motion. It was Excalibur.

"That you, old friend?" observed the Curate. "I was on my way to see about you. Now that you are out, you may as well come and bear a hand."

And the pair sprinted along the line towards the blazing coaches.

It was dawn — grey, weeping, and cheerless — on Tetley Moor. Another engine had come up from behind to take what was left of the train back to the Junction. Seven coaches, including the lordly sleeping-saloon, stood intact; the other four, with the engine and tender, lay where they had fallen—a mass of charred wood and twisted metal. A motor-car belonging to a doctor stood in the roadway a hundred yards off, and its owner, together with a brother of the craft who had been a passenger in the train, were attending to the injured. There were fourteen of these altogether, mostly suffering from burns. These were made as comfortable as possible in the sleeping-berths, which their owners had vacated. Under a tarpaulin by the side of the permanent way lay three figures which would never feel pain again.

"Take your seats, please!" said the surviving guard in a subdued voice. He spoke at the direction of a big man in a heavy overcoat, who appeared to have taken charge of the salvage operations. The passengers clambered up into the train.

Only one delayed. He was a long, lean young man, black from head to foot with soot and oil. His left arm was badly burned, and seeing a doctor disengaged at last he came forward to have it dressed.

The big man in the heavy overcoat approached him.

"My name is Caversham," he said. "I happen to be a director of the Company. If you will give me your name and address, I will see to it that your services to-night are suitably recognised. The way you got those two children out of the first coach was splendid, if I may be allowed to say so. We did not even know they were there."

The young man's teeth suddenly flashed out into a white smile against the blackness of his face.

"Neither did I, sir," he said. "Let me introduce you to the responsible party."

He whistled. Out of the grey dawn loomed an eerie monster, heavily singed, wagging its tail.

"Scally, old man," said the curate, "this gentleman wants to present you with an illuminated address. Thank him prettily!" Then to the doctor: "I'm ever so much obliged to you; it's quite comfortable now."

He began stiffly to pull on his coat and waistcoat. Lord Caversham, lending a hand, noted the waistcoat, and said quickly:

"Will you travel in my compartment? I should like to have a word with you, if I may."

"I think I had better go and have a look at these poor folk in the sleeper first," replied the Curate. "They may require my services—professionally."

"At the Junction, then, perhaps?" suggested Lord Caversham.

But at the Junction the

Curate found a special waiting to proceed north by a loop line; and being in no mind to receive compliments or waste his substance on a hotel bill, departed forthwith, taking his charred confederate, Excalibur, with him.

VIII.

But Fortune, once she takes a fancy to you, is not readily shaken off, as most successful men are always trying to forget.

A fortnight later Lord Caversham, leaving his hotel in a great northern town—he combined the misfortunes of being both a director of the railway company and a Cabinet Minister, and had spent a harassing fortnight attending inquests and explaining to fervent young counsel why he had not been present upon the footplate of the engine supervising the driver and fireman at the time of the accident—encountered an acquaintance whom he had no difficulty whatever in recognising.

It was Excalibur, jammed fast between two stationary tram-cars—he had not yet shaken down to town life—submitting to a painful but effective process of extraction at the hands of a *posse* of policemen and tram-conductors, shrilly directed by a small but commanding girl of the lodging-house drudge variety.

When this enterprise had been brought to a successful conclusion, and the congested traffic moved on by the overheated policemen, Lord Caversham crossed the street and tapped the damsel upon the shoulder.

"Can you kindly inform me where the owner of that dog may be found?" he inquired politely.

"Yass. Se'nty-one Pilgrim Street. But 'e won't sell him."

"Should I be likely to find him at home if I called now?"

"Yass. Bin in bed since the eccident. Got a nasty arm."

"Perhaps you would not mind accompanying me back to Pilgrim Street in my car."

After that Mary Ellen's mind became an incoherent blur. A stately limousine glided up: Mary Ellen was handed in by a footman, and Excalibur was stuffed in after her, in instalments. The grand gentleman entered by the opposite door and sat down beside her; but Mary Ellen was much too dazed to converse with him.

The arrival of the equipage in Pilgrim Street was the greatest moment of Mary Ellen's life. After the grand gentleman had disappeared within the dingy portals of Number Seventy-one in quest of Mr Gilmore, Mary Ellen and Excalibur remained in the street, chaperoning the chauffeur and footman, and keeping the respectful but inquisitive crowd which promptly gathered round the gleaming car at a proper distance.

Meanwhile, upstairs in the

first floor front, the Curate, lying in his uncomfortable flock bed was saying—

"If you really mean it, sir——"

"I do mean it. If those two children had been burned to death unnoticed I should never have forgiven myself, and the public would never have forgiven the Company."

"Well, sir, as you say that, you—well, you *could* do me a service. Could you possibly use your influence to get me a billet—I'm not asking for an incumbency: any old curacy would do—a billet I could marry on?" He flushed scarlet. "I—we have been waiting for a long time now."

There was a long silence, and the Curate wondered if he had been too mercenary in his request. Then Lord Caversham asked—

"What are you getting at present?"

"A hundred and twenty a year."

This was about two-thirds of the salary which Lord Caversham paid his chauffeur. He asked another question, in his curious, abrupt, staccato manner.

"How much do you want?"

"We could make both ends meet on two hundred. But another fifty would enable me to make her a lot more comfortable," said the Curate wistfully. The great man surveyed him silently—wonderingly, too, if the Curate had known. Presently he asked—

"Afraid of hard work?"

"No work is hard to a man with a wife and a home of his own," replied the Curate with simple fervour.

Lord Caversham smiled grimly. He had more homes of his own than he could conveniently live in, and he had been married three times. But even he found work hard now and then.

"I wonder!" he said. "Well, good-afternoon. I should like to be introduced to your *fiancée* one day."

He walked briskly down the stairs and into the street. Mary Ellen, frustrating the footman, darted forward and flung open the door of the car with a magnificent flourish.

Excalibur, mistaking her intention, and anxious to oblige, promptly tried to crawl in.

IX.

A tramp opened the Rectory gate and shambled up the neat gravel walk towards the house. Taking a short cut through the shrubbery he emerged suddenly upon a little lawn.

Upon the lawn a lady was sitting in a basket-chair, beside a perambulator, whose occupant was slumbering peacefully. A small but intensely capable nursemaid, prone upon the grass in a curvilinear attitude, was acting as tunnel to a young gentleman of three who was impersonating a locomotive.

The tramp approached the group and asked huskily for

alms. He was a burly and unpleasant specimen of his class—a class all too numerous on the outskirts of the great industrial parish of Smeltingborough.

The lady in the basket-chair looked up.

"The Rector is out," she said. "If you will go into the town you will find him at the Church Hall, and he will investigate your case."

"Oh, the Rector is out, is he?" repeated the tramp, in tones of distinct satisfaction.

"Yes," said Eileen.

The tramp advanced another pace.

"Give us half-a-crown," he said. "I haven't had a bite of food since yesterday, lady. Nor a drink neither," he added humorously.

"Please go away," said the lady. "You know where to find the Rector."

The tramp smiled unpleasantly, but made no attempt to move.

The railway-tunnel rose abruptly to its feet, and remarked with asperity—

"Now then, pop off!"

Even this had no effect. The lady looked up again.

"You refuse to go away?" she said.

"I'll go for half-a-crown," replied the tramp, with the gracious air of one anxious to oblige a lady.

"Watch Baby for a moment, Mary Ellen," said Eileen.

She rose, and disappeared into the house, followed by the gratified smile of the tramp. He was a reasonable man, and knew that ladies did not wear pockets.

"Thirsty weather," he remarked affably.

Mary Ellen, keeping one hand upon the shoulder of Master Gerald Caversham Gilmore and the other upon the edge of the baby's perambulator, merely chuckled sardonically.

Next moment there were footsteps round the corner of the house, and Eileen reappeared. She was clinging with both hands to the collar of an enormous dog. Its tongue lolled from its great jaws, its tail waved menacingly from side to side; its great limbs were bent, as if for a spring. Its eyes were half closed, as if to focus the exact distance.

"Run!" cried Eileen to the tramp. "I can't hold him in much longer!"

This was true enough, except that when Eileen said "in" she meant "up."

But the tramp did not linger to discuss prepositions. There was a scurry of feet; the gate banged; and he was gone.

With a sigh of relief Eileen let go of Excalibur's collar. Excalibur promptly collapsed upon the grass and went to sleep again.

THE EARLY VICTORIANS—AND AFTER.

We are accustomed to apply somewhat vaguely the term "Early Victorian" to anything that strikes us as crude and inartistic in furniture and household decorations; and the period is associated in our minds with ugliness and discomfort in all forms—poke-bonnets and embroidered aprons, starched cravats and tightly-strapped trousers, samplers and reticules, to say nothing of horsehair sofas, heavily-curtained four-posters, and cumbrous tables and chiffoniers. We are apt also to conclude that a society which could tolerate such glaring specimens of bad taste in art and decoration, must in other respects have been vastly inferior to the modern age of progress and enlightenment. As to furniture and decorations, the point may be conceded at once; for many unlovely specimens of it still survive in the "parlours" of farmhouses, handed down from father to son, and untouched since the days of Mrs Poyser, and also in the drawing-rooms of old-fashioned bankers and solicitors in provincial towns. But these specimens of the bad taste of our great-grandfathers — the ponderous mahogany sideboards and dining-tables, the massive epergnes, the wine-coolers, and chandeliers—were chiefly found in the houses of self-made men, who liked their furniture to be solid and substantial like themselves, and regarded it as a reflex of their own importance and respectability. Higher in the social scale, houses at this period generally had an air of distinction and good taste, for the simple reason that new furniture was rarely bought. Country houses were filled with specimens of Sheraton and Chippendale, Queen Anne's silver and Georgian bric-a-brac, old Chelsea and Lowestoft china, Louis Quinze cabinets and tapestries, and other priceless heirlooms of the past. Even in smaller mansions there was frequently an atmosphere of old-fashioned refinement such as Mrs Humphry Ward has so happily described for us, with a delicacy of touch that is all her own—

"It was a mild March day, and there were misty sun-gleams stealing along the lawns of Cureton House. None entered the room itself, for its two semicircular windows looked north over the gardens. Yet it was not uncheerful. Its faded curtains of blue rep, its buff walls, on which the pictures and miniatures in their tarnished gilt frames were arranged at intervals in stiff patterns and groups; the Italian glass painted with dilapidated Cupids over the mantelpiece, the two or three Sheraton armchairs and settees covered with threadbare needlework from the days of 'Evelina'; a carpet of old and well-preserved Brussels,—blue arabesques on a white ground; one or two pieces of old satinwood furniture, very fine and perfect; a heavy centre table, its cloth garnished with some early Victorian wool-work, and a pair of pink glass vases; on another small table close

by, of a most dainty and spindle-legged correctness, a set of Indian chessmen under a glass shade; and on another a collection of tiny animals, stags and dogs for the most part, deftly 'pinched' out of soft paper, also under glass, and as perfect as when their slender limbs were first fashioned by Cousin Mary Leicester's mother, somewhere about the year that Marie Antoinette mounted the scaffold,—these various elements, ugly and beautiful, combined to make a general effect, clean, fastidious, frugal and refined, that was in truth full of a sort of acid charm."[1]

This is a charming picture, and was probably drawn from life. Some of us may have a dim recollection of rooms like this in our childhood, furnished with an austere simplicity but with the taste and refinement of a bygone age. We can almost recall the faint perfume of the mignonette boxes in the windows or the rose-leaves in the *pot-pourri* vases! There are other charming glimpses of Early Victorian households in Mrs Gaskell's 'Cranford,' in Miss Mitford's sketches of a country village, in George Eliot's description of Dorlcote Mill and Mrs Poyser's farm, and in Anthony Trollope's chronicles of Barchester. Life in the old-fashioned cathedral towns and country villages flowed on from year to year, peacefully and uneventfully—with few amusements or distractions, with no startling episodes, but with a general air of comfort and wellbeing. This peaceful existence, however, was in strong contrast to the bustle and activity of the manufacturing towns in the north and centre of England; for in the twenty years which elapsed between Waterloo and the Queen's Accession, there had been an amazing outburst of commercial activity and intellectual development. It was in England, as it had been in Greece after the Persian War—

"The increase of national wealth gave men greater leisure to cultivate the arts of peace and inspired them with a loftier ideal of excellence; while the sublime self-confidence, engendered by their achievements before and after their victorious campaigns, led them to annex all Knowledge as their province, and to invade, with indiscriminating zeal, the boundless fields of speculation and research."[2]

England seemed to have awakened like a giant refreshed by sleep, and as she had put forth all her material strength in her deadly struggle against Napoleon, so she was now displaying to the world another feature of the national character—a many-sided intellectual activity, almost unequalled in her annals. In the twenty years we are speaking of, science had advanced in rapid strides. The dreams of philosophers and the magic of Arabian fairy tales had been realised in actual life. Men's ideas of time and space had been revolutionised. Steam had been applied to

[1] 'Lady Rose's Daughter,' p. 166.

[2] Aristotle, Politics, V. (viii.), 6, sec. 10. The above is a paraphrase, in the manner of Gibbon, rather than a translation of the text.

machinery; a network of railways was spreading itself from one end of the country to the other; coal mines and iron mines were being developed; and the great manufacturing centres — Birmingham, Staffordshire, Lancashire, Yorkshire — had become hives of multitudinous industry, and were doubling and trebling their populations. Early in the Queen's reign the penny postage was established, and a few years later the tax on newspapers was abolished — two measures of incalculable benefit. The national intellect was expanding in every direction, and probably never again shall we see such illustrious names in every department of thought —in law and history, in poetry and fiction, in the arts and sciences — as in the much-despised Early Victorian age: that is, from the Queen's Accession in 1837 to Lord Palmerston's death in 1865. These names are at once so famous and so familiar that we can hardly realise that the men who bore them achieved their greatness within the narrow limits of thirty years in a single reign. In Literature we have Hallam and Macaulay, Froude and Grote, Tennyson and Browning, Clough and Matthew Arnold, Ruskin and Carlyle, Dickens and Thackeray, Lever and Lytton, Charlotte Brontë and George Eliot; distinguished Churchmen such as Philpotts, Wilberforce, Pusey, Keble, Thirlwall, and John Henry Newman; great Lawyers — Brougham, Lyndhurst, Westbury, Cupley, Cockburn; in Science — Tyndall, Faraday, Stuart Mill, Richard Owen, and Herbert Spencer. In the domain of Politics the list of distinguished statesmen and debaters is even more striking, for among them may be found the greatest orators since the days of Pitt—Peel, Gladstone, Disraeli, and, greatest of all, John Bright. We might add to them Sheil and O'Connell, both unrivalled speakers on public platforms, and Stanley —afterwards Earl of Derby —"the Rupert of Debate." These are the protagonists and they stand on the highest level, but in both Houses of Parliament there was no lack of eloquent debaters and accomplished statesmen: Macaulay and Robert Cecil, Palmerston and Robert Lowe, Cornewall Lewis and Sidney Herbert, Lords Clarendon, Selborne, Malmesbury, Hartington, and others. Nor must we forget the great Proconsuls who governed India, and the great soldiers who saved it for us —Auckland, Canning, and Dalhousie; and John Nicholson, the Lawrences, Havelock, Outram, and Colin Campbell.

There is one name which we have reserved to the last —the greatest name of all. The Duke of Wellington was still alive, and retained much of the vigour and intellectual force of his early days. His simplicity and directness of speech, as well as his disinterestedness and devotion to duty, his unswerving truthfulness, raised him far above the dead level of party politics, and

caused him, when he thought the public interest required it, to support the Government of the day, whether it happened to be Whig or Tory. His influence and example were of incalculable value in elevating the tone and temper of both Houses, and in sustaining what John Bright called the innate honesty and moral sense of the politicians of his time. Debates were then, as now, occasionally fierce and acrimonious, especially on the Corn Law question, and there was hard hitting on both sides; but as a rule the speakers were generous opponents, and bore no malice when the fight was over. The House of Commons was then emphatically an assemblage of gentlemen, and still deserved its title of the best Club in London. There was an air of good-fellowship and *camaraderie* about the place which is entirely wanting now. There were many broad-acred squires and heads of county families—men of birth and breeding, of unimpeachable honour and veracity, who had passed, after the manner of their folk, through the best of all trainings, the public schools and the university, and as "Knights of the Shire" brought with them that good sense and practical capacity for business necessary to magistrates and the owners of large estates. Their presence in the House undoubtedly elevated the general tone of the debates, and their character and influence had a restraining effect on party violence. For at that time Mr Gladstone's eulogium most certainly held good:—

> "I may speak of the House of Commons as a school of discipline to those who enter it. In my opinion it is a school of extraordinary power and efficacy. It is a great and noble school for the creation of all the qualities of force and versatility of intellect, and it is also a great moral school. It is a school of temper. It is also a school of patience. It is a school of honour, and it is also a school of justice."[1]

We fear that to the present Government this noble tribute to a great assembly would appear mere foolishness—a vain rhetorical outburst. To them "Honour" and "Justice," "Truth" and "Conscience," are so many unmeaning terms—the cant of rhetoricians or the catchwords of an angry Opposition. To them such words have no binding force, no political weight or value, and their use and practice have completely passed out of date,—they may be safely left to politicians with old-fashioned ideas of morality, such as Mr Arthur Balfour or Mr Bonar Law! This state of mind produced by bitter party spirit, noticed by a profound observer in his own day, has actually occurred again: "The meaning of words [he says] had no longer the same relation to things, but was changed by them as they thought proper. Reckless

[1] Quoted in Lord Morley's 'Life of Gladstone,' i. 86.

daring was held to be loyal courage; prudent delay was the excuse of a coward; frantic energy was true manliness. . . . The seal of good faith was not divine law, but fellowship in crime." And the historian adds what is as true now as it was then: "The cause of all these evils was the love of power, originating in avarice and ambition."[1]

The last sentence quoted gives the real explanation of this latter-day degeneracy in politics. The Victorian statesmen were, as a rule, men of means, as well as men of birth and education, and were quite independent of their official salaries. Many of them accepted office with the greatest reluctance and quitted it without the slightest regret (we need only name three men of different types—Wellington, Peel, and John Bright), whereas nowadays the Treasury Bench is filled by a set of needy adventurers — or gentlemen of fortune, as pirates were fond of terming themselves—ready to promise anything and everything to keep their seats, and to sell their souls so long as they may be allowed to draw their official salaries. It is supposed that political bribery and corruption disappeared with the rotten boroughs in the Reform Bill of 1832 or with the Ballot Act of 1872. But if those robust statesmen, Sir Robert Walpole and Lord North, could revisit the scene of their earthly triumphs and watch the procedure of the present Government, they would be astonished at their own moderation and lament their lost opportunities. Each of them had, in his day, been accused of political corruption. "Corruption! a fico for the phrase!" What were their little douceurs bestowed on deserving merit—a blue ribband to this peer and a red ribband to that, a few hundreds for a doubtful vote or a few thousands for a rotten borough, a few patent offices for their relations or a few sinecures for their friends,—what were these compared with the millions lavished by the present Government to purchase the votes of the proletariate? In these days of so-called electoral purity, votes are purchased on the same wholesale principle (to use Disraeli's illustration) as in Charlemagne's conversion of the Saxons, who were "proselytised by platoons and baptised by battalions." The Home Rule Bill itself is nothing more or less than a gigantic bribe—a colossal sop to the many-headed Cerberus of Nationalism, a kingdom given in exchange for the Irish vote. The Payment of Members' Bill—a measure detested by every honest man in the House—was passed to catch the votes of impecunious Labour Members. The Old Age Pensions Act was passed to secure the goodwill of agricultural labourers; while a whole section of the Civil Service has been filled by Mr Lloyd George's nominees

[1] Thucydides, iii. 82 (Jowett).

to carry out the provisions of his hated Insurance Act. To quote a phrase from 'Redgauntlet': "They did things on a large scale in the *Jumping Jenny*"—not that the Government is worthy of comparison with that gallant little craft. It rather resembles the ill-omened boat of Lycidas—

> "That perfidious bark,
> Built in the Eclipse and rigged with curses dark."

Passing from poetry to prose, we may quote another dictum of Mr Gladstone's: "Personal character," he says, "should be the basis of a man's politics." In other words, a statesman worthy of the name should have a conscience, a lofty ideal of duty, and a keen sense of honour and of responsibility. Above all, he should put the interests of his country above those of his party. The Premiers who held office between 1837 and 1865—Melbourne, Peel, Derby, Russell, Aberdeen, Palmerston — were one and all men of the highest principles, carefully trained in official life, wise and capable, and ready to make any personal sacrifice in order that the country might be well served and the Queen's government carried on. Of these Prime Ministers, the two who were held in the highest estimation by their contemporaries were undoubtedly Peel and Palmerston, whose memory is cherished among Harrovians. Peel's merits as a statesman were not perhaps thoroughly appreciated till his death, when there was an outburst of national grief among men of all shades in politics. John Bright, who had been at one time his bitter opponent, shed tears (as the Duke of Wellington did) on hearing of his death, and paid a noble tribute to his "profound attainments" and unselfish patriotism. Palmerston was a statesman of an entirely different type. He made no pretensions to learning or eloquence, though he could hold his own in debate and was a master of happy phrases and good-humoured retorts. But he was English to the core, and was trusted—and, indeed, almost adored—by all classes of his countrymen, whom he dominated during his last tenure of office as Bolingbroke and Pitt had dominated them in their day. The secret of his amazing popularity was his devotion to his country and his vigorous and masterful foreign policy. He may perhaps have sometimes carried his *Civis Romanus sum* theory too far, but the result was that foreign powers recognised—and detested—a master's hand, and the prestige of England on the Continent never stood higher than during his last Ministry. The maxim, *si vis pacem, para bellum*, was amply justified, for the country was never so peaceful and the burden of taxation was never lighter than between the years 1859 and 1865—the year of Palmerston's death.

Such words as "patriotism" and "prestige" carry no weight (as we have said before) with H.M.'s present Ministers. They act on the principle expressed

by Bolingbroke with such cynical frankness in 1813:

> "I am afraid [he writes] that the principal spring of our actions was to have the government of the State in our hands; that our principal views were the conservation of this power, great employments to ourselves, and great opportunities for rewarding those who had helped to raise us, and of hurting those who stood in opposition to us."[1]

These atrocious maxims, worthy of Machiavelli or Mephistopheles, have been taken seriously to heart by Mr Asquith and his colleagues. No better exposition of their political faith and practice could possibly be found. Their "principal views" have nothing to do with the service of their country. Their objects, freely and frankly avowed by them, are "the conservation of power" at any price—namely, by an unholy coalition with the Irish Nationalists; the "rewarding" of their satellites and sycophants by lavish gifts of public money; and "the hurting" of their opponents by destroying, as far as they can, every safeguard of the Constitution. They have already "broken," to use the Radical phrase, the controlling power of our Second Chamber; they have tried to crush the loyalists of Ulster by a *coup d'état*, and because the army refused to do their "dirty work" for them, the army is to be "broken" like the House of Lords! The amazing thing is to find a man so highly educated and of such exceptional ability as Mr Asquith pursuing a policy which Peel or Palmerston, or indeed any Early Victorian Premier, would have repudiated with loathing and contempt. Mr Asquith was in his day a distinguished Oxford scholar, who sat at the feet of Gamaliel,—that is, he was at Balliol under Jowett. He took a first-class in the Classical school, which implies a considerable knowledge of ancient history and philosophy. Did he learn nothing from the history of the past? Did Aristotle's scathing indictment of demagogues and democracy in the 'Politics' convey no moral lesson? Did the long controversy on Justice and the masterly analysis of a nation's decline and fall in Plato's 'Republic' carry no weight or argument? Did the heroic examples of unselfish patriotism in Greek and Roman history afford no models for imitation? Apparently, Mr Asquith is a political Gallio, who regards strong emotion or enthusiasm with cynical indifference. He weighs the chances and calculates the profit of a certain line of policy with the scrupulous care of an opportunist and a utilitarian—

> "One to whose smooth-rubbed soul can cling
> Nor form, nor feeling, great or small;
> A reasoning, self-sufficing thing,
> An intellectual All-in-all."[2]

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[1] Quoted in Lord Morley's 'Walpole,' p. 22.
[2] Wordsworth, "The Poet's Epitaph."

No. Oxford was wasted on a cold-blooded temperament like his. It is from his experiences at the Bar that he derives his moral tone and his "methods of reasoning in politics." These methods are those of an Old Bailey lawyer, in the days of Mr Serjeant Ballantyne, who had no inconvenient scruples and was not overburdened by a conscience. Mr Asquith is a master of evasion, of equivocation, of bringing in side issues to avoid debating the main question, and of making the worse appear the better reason. He envelopes the subject in an atmosphere of *Nisi Prius*, and he is as adroit and dexterous in wriggling out of a false or difficult position as the Artful Dodger himself. It is something to be a great dialectician, but it is something more to be an honest man. If Mr Asquith was sincere in his convictions, allowance might be made for him, but we know — and he knows himself — that in his heart he cares no more about the Home Rule Bill than about last year's snow. He never mentioned the subject in his electoral address of 1910, and it was only when the Liberal party lost 100 seats at the election that he found it necessary to make a compact with Mr Redmond and sacrifice the finest province in Ireland as the price of the Irish vote, which has served to keep him in office.

Passing on to Mr Asquith's colleagues, the Foreign Secretary and the Chancellor of the Exchequer rank first. Sir Edward Grey is a gentleman and a well-trained diplomatist: he has discharged the duties of his office with tact and skill, and one can only wonder — as he probably wonders himself — *Que diable allait-il faire dans cette galère?* What the deuce is he doing in this gang of adventurers?

Now what are the qualifications of a Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Greeks expressed these by a single word — *phronēsis* — that practical knowledge or skill which marks the expert at his trade, whether that trade be the making of boots or the framing of Budgets. "This skill," says a shrewd observer, "may be considered as the combined result of special training, actual experience, and natural capacity."[1] The two most distinguished Chancellors in Early Victorian days, Mr Gladstone and Sir George Cornewall Lewis, combined these three necessary qualifications in a remarkable degree. Compared with these intellectual giants of the past, with their brilliant careers at Oxford and their capacity for Finance, what are Mr Lloyd George's qualifications for his office? Has he the natural capacity, the special training, and the actual experience which are considered indispensable? When his "exuberant verbosity" — to use a mild expression—had procured his election to Parliament, and subsequently to two

[1] Sir G. C. Lewis, 'Methods of Reasoning in Politics,' ii. 399.

important offices, where he was as much out of place as Christopher Sly in the Duke's palace, the consequences were exactly what might have been predicted when an ignorant and ill-bred man is thrust into a position so manifestly superior to his capacity. He launched forth at once into the wildest schemes of taxation and expenditure which have cost his country more millions than he is himself worth pence. The only two great financial measures for which Mr George is directly responsible have been pronounced by public opinion to be "colossal failures." The first of these was his Budget of 1909, with its iniquitous "land valuation," and the hated Insurance Act, which has ruined the Friendly Societies.

Again, what is to be said about Mr George's "Secret Inquiry" Commission and its preposterous "Report"?[1] A Royal Commission, with the power of cross-examining witnesses and sifting evidence, might have done much to clear up the questions of land-tenure, housing, wages, and so forth. But such a Commission would have been carefully selected from both sides of the House: it would have been composed of experts who would have examined both sides of the question and would have made an impartial statement of the case. The Commission nominated by Mr George consists entirely of his own partisans, and with the exception of the chairman, Mr Acland, none of the members apparently own an acre of land or are connected with agriculture. It is in fact a Commission *pour rire*, and might have figured in a comic opera. There are one or two K.C.'s, one or two M.P.'s, including a Mr Davies of Carnarvon, solicitor; an Austrian baron; there is a Celtic scholar, a writer of stage plays, a gentleman interested in cocoa, and a journalist who probably worked up the materials of the Report in a catch-penny form and added the necessary local colour. The Report itself is a farrago of false inductions, sophistical arguments, unreliable statistics, quack remedies, and impossible recommendations, founded on evidence which would fall to pieces under cross-examination, and which has been supplied not only by farmers and labourers, but by "grocers, barbers, chemists, chauffeurs, schoolmasters, signalmen, fellmongers, and cycle-agents!" It would really seem as if the Committee had examined the chance acquaintances they met in the bars of country inns or the tap-rooms of village ale-houses! They sent out some four thousand papers of questions, and selected such answers as suited their purpose. "Those who think" (says Mr Acland in his preface) "that information obtained in this way is necessarily tainted at the source, will judge ac-

[1] This is, of course, the Agricultural Report. The Urban Report was published since the above criticism was written.

cordingly." We thank Mr Acland for his hint, and do judge accordingly. A Report based on "information obtained in this way" is not worth the paper it is printed on. A scathing exposure of its fallacies and inaccuracies has already been made by the two writers of an admirable little book—'The Land Retort'—recently published.[1] Unlike the members of this hybrid Committee, these writers are men of practical experience who know their business thoroughly. One of them is Mr Charles Adeane, the Squire of Babraham—that picturesque little village near Cambridge, associated with the names of the two famous racers, Godolphin Arabian and Eclipse. Mr Adeane is not only a landowner, but a farmer himself on a large scale; while his fellow-author, Mr Edwin Savill, is a land surveyor of wide and varied experience.

Mr George owes his success entirely to a brazen tongue and unabashed effrontery. He is glib, fluent, persuasive, and plausible, reckless in assertion, and a noble economist of the truth. That, indeed, is the only economy which he condescends to practise. Demagogues, of course, are the commonplaces of history. They appear at intervals like baleful meteors, flash across the political horizon, and then disappear into the outer darkness. They are of many types and varieties —all more or less offensive—but it has been reserved for our age to produce a new and portentous specimen of the *Georgium Sidus!*

The demagogue *par excellence* in Early Victorian days was, of course, John Bright, but morally and intellectually he stands on an incalculably higher plane than Mr George. There is no comparison or resemblance between this latter-day Jack Cade and the great Tribune of the people, any more than there is between a St Bernard and a toy spaniel. The one is calm, dignified, majestic, with a deep-toned voice that shakes the hills; the other is fretful, snappish, and a "yapper." Indeed, no two characters ever offered so complete a contrast. On the one side we have the typical Welshman — excitable, impulsive, voluble, and not too scrupulous; and on the other—"Genuine Saxon by the soul of Hengist," as Cedric says of a knight in 'Ivanhoe.'[2] Saxon he was to the core in speech, in manner, in appearance—calm and unimpassioned, using no gesticulations — but clothing his thoughts in that pure well of English undefiled, drawn from the two books he studied most—the Bible and 'Paradise Lost.' Bright's moral earnestness and noble character made him respected even by his bitterest political opponents, who were enthralled in spite of themselves by his marvellous oratory. He enjoyed, as he tells us himself, "doing a little

[1] 'The Land Retort' (2s. 6d.) Published by John Murray, 1914.
[2] This illustration occurs in one of Hayward's Essays.

prize-fighting," but he fought fair, and did not slander individuals. If he was a hard hitter, he was also a generous opponent. It is true that he had no liking for the Church (bishops' aprons were an abomination in his sight), or for "the privileged classes"; but he was on friendly terms with many of the latter, and spoke of "the Duke of Newcastle, Sidney Herbert, Lord Stanley, and Lord Hartington as 'useful and industrious members of the aristocracy.'"[1] On two important points he was as sound as the staunchest Conservative. He showed a consistent loyalty to the Crown, and he was a strenuous supporter of the Union. He recognised the personal virtues of Queen Victoria. "I am not a courtier [he writes], but I can respect an ancient monarchy, and admire and even reverence a monarch whom monarchy has not spoiled."[2]

Bright was the uncompromising opponent of the Home Rule Bill, introduced by Gladstone in 1886, and it was mainly his opposition and the weight it carried with the public that caused that Bill's ignominious overthrow. Bright writes thus to Mr Gladstone in May 1886:—

"I am not in favour of Home Rule or to the creation of a Dublin Parliament. . . .

"I cannot consent to a measure which is so offensive to the whole Protestant population of Ireland, and to the whole sentiment of the province of Ulster, so far as its loyal and Protestant people are concerned. I cannot agree to exclude them from the Protection of the Imperial Parliament."[3]

When the fateful Debate was over and the bells were ringing for the division, Bright solemnly left his seat on the Treasury Bench, where he had been sitting next Mr Gladstone, and without a word walked into the Opposition lobby. That parting of the ways must have been one of the bitterest moments in Mr Gladstone's life.

C. W. C.

[1] Trevelyan's 'Life of John Bright,' p. 156. [2] Ib., p. 401. [3] Ib., p. 450.

THE NEW ROAD.

A ROMANCE.

BY NEIL MUNRO.

CHAPTER XXXV.—THE PORTRAIT.

THROUGHOUT the night a sudden change came on the weather. Next day there was a fog that hid the mounts completely, narrowed every prospect to a circle of a hundred yards. The loch was blotted out but for a leaden margin; it seemed a scrap of town—the ruins of a fire, still smoking—that stood at the river's mouth with a gable now and then shown through the vapour, gullet of a lane, or figures moving vaguely on the quay. The fishermen were out yet on the water; high above the burgh, in the steeple, rang the bell to guide them in, and on the breast a man kept constant drumming with a drum.

To the child of mist this fog came like a benison. Ninian breathed it like a scent; bathed his spirit in it; felt old powers revive. It was an extra night to him, conceded by Almighty for the *beachdair's* benefit. Many a turn he took that morning through the town and up the glen, unseen as if he had Macreevan's mantle. For once were windows useless to a people who never saw Ninian walk along the causeway but they looked out after him to see where he was going. With a plaid hung loose about his body and his hat scrugged down, he could pass within a whisper of acquaintances unrecognised.

It would be ill to say what he was looking for; indeed he did not know himself; but as in mists like this his folk, in the years of persecution, found from practice speculation quicker, instincts more acute since all their being was on edge to make up for the loss of vision, and they became as leaves stirred by the faintest air, he hoped the gloom of this November day that threw him in upon himself might send him stumbling on something.

That morning he had bathed in ice-cold water, thinly clad himself, but for the plaid, and eaten nothing—not a scrap! It was his father's plan.—"Aye, Ninian, be clean, and lean, and cold, and ravenous when big things are a-doing; then God will come to thee, and woe upon the foe!"

The death of Duncanson last night had been a blow. It was a fox gone into earth just when the grip was on him. And with him, too, had disappeared a hundred chances to find out

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his secret. No other body knew where Paul Macmaster died, nor how, and it was doubtful if he had left a scrap of anything for dog to fasten on. That had been Ninian's notion in the morning; he had grown more hopeful as it passed. For he had found out how, exactly, Duncanson had died. He had had no warning. There was granted him no time to trample out the embers of his fire the way Clan Alpine did in woods when they heard the *cailleach-oidhche* command a scattering. There had come to him a letter; he had read it standing, given out a cry, and fallen in a heap, to die ten minutes after.

In the suddenness of this was Ninian's hope that everything could not yet be destroyed; he was sure it was MacCailein's letter, and at ten o'clock, when he went up to Drimdorran House by MacCailein's orders to seal up Duncanson's repositories, this letter was the first thing that he asked for.

What was his amazement to have the Muileach hand it to him still unopened, the boar's head still intact on the red seal at its back!

"What's this?" said he. "There was another letter, then?"

And then he heard of Lovat's. A runner had come last night from Inverness, and it was a letter from Simon Fraser that Duncanson was reading when he fell.

"Where is it?" asked Ninian sharply. "Fetch it, Donald, fetch it!"

It changed the whole position, and yet it had less than a dozen lines. "All I have got is the twig the fish were on," wrote Lovat. "They're gone on the road to Inveraray, round by Ruthven. And here I can do no more for you. I am beat to ken what your trouble is, but if it concerns Paul Macmaster umquhile of Drimdorran, the lad's papa, they have talked it out with Fraser, who at the time was my post-runner, for he was shipped with them. I cannot lay hands on him; he may be with them."

With the letter in his hand, Ninian stood in the business closet pondering a while. He sought in its lines for what had crumbled the man who had got it, now lying up the stair, his warfare over. It was plainly not the news of their escape, for that was known to him already; it was the reference to Fraser. Ninian took out his tangled hank and absently began to pluck it, although the keys of Duncanson were there before him on the desk.

The room was sombre, darkened by the plaid still tacked above the window, and only half drawn over by the Muileach to let in the dim light of the foggy day. Ninian tugged it from its fastening when the Muileach left him to his business, and looked out into the garden. Beyond the gravel and a plot of perished flowers was nothing visible; the fog hung over all. From a twig of rose-bush nailed to the ribbits of the window moisture dripped;

there was a smell of mould and rotten leafage.

He turned his first attention to the desk. Everything was in the trimmest order. It was a great, deep oak 'scretoire, its drawers filled up with letter-books, accounts, and leases. He started at the lowest drawer, having lit a candle; sat on the floor, and patiently went through its whole contents. There was no need to scrutinise either individual letters copied, or accounts; their character as a whole was obvious: they were concerned with Islay's business. In none of the drawers was a single document of any interest to the searcher.

It was more hopefully he opened up the flap at the top of the 'scretoire and looked at the pigeon-holes within, but even there, was nothing to reward his curiosity. Bundles of letters and receipts docketed on their backs brought Islay's business down to three weeks ago, among them Æneas's acknowledgments of fees paid for his tutoring of Will Campbell.

Such desks had always in them nooks and slides, with what had long become a mere pretence at secrecy; Ninian pulled at the fluted thick partitions in between the pigeon-holes, and drew out upright drawers that were empty—all but one, and that the last he came on, slyly fastened with a spring it took him long to find.

There was in it a silver snuff-box, tarnished, and a strand of a woman's hair tied up with a piece of tape.

He put the hair back where he got it, and stood up to examine the box a little closer to the candle. When he opened it and saw a portrait on the lid inside, he started. At first he thought it was Margaret, or her mother, but it was neither, and yet the face, in a dim way, seemed familiar.

"*Tha i agam!*—I have her!" said he, at last. "Macmaster's wife!" and he slipped it in his pocket.

Beyond this he found nothing with the slightest bearing on the former owner of Drimdorran.

He went along the shelves that lined the room; took out more business books and looked at them: at the back of the topmost shelf he found a plan of the estate, a list of farm-stock, and a letter of Paul Macmaster's, all tied together in a roll. The letter he read with interest, and pocketed.

On the desk and on the chamber door he put a seal, and it was afternoon when he went home, his business finished.

To the food which his daughter put before him he did little more than give a stirring on the plate; he fed on cogitations. It was not till she told him Æneas and his uncle had been calling for him that he saw she was, herself, absorbed and troubled, something remote, detached, and apprehensive in her man-

ner. It was plain she had been weeping. What thoughts of her and Æneas had been waked in him by the hint of Forbes at Bunchrew he had stifled up till now as soon as they arose; an awkward shyness made him shrink from prying. But this unquiet anxiety of hers demanded settlement; this time he summoned up his courage, as he always could when tender things were urgent — not in English, but in Gaelic.

"Ar't a little dipped in love, lass?" he asked her slyly, with a bold dash at the point which approached more delicately he probably would have shied from at the last.

She got on the instant in a flame of colour. It was the first time he had ever shown a sign that he expected her some day to be a woman with a life of her own apart from him.

"As deep's Dunchuach!" she said in passion: if she had not said it so she should have lied.

"Tach!" said her father, wondering to find this awkward business so simple after all, "thou'rt just a slip of a lass, and that disease is not enduring. Take sleep and buttermilk, and a cooler day will come, and another fellow. This one's just as poor's the tongs."

"And that's what I like about him!" she cried. "And you would make of him a laird!"

"Well," he said, "that's what it looks like. If I could just get the truth of his father's end——"

"I hope you never will!" she cried.

He jumped to his feet. "My soul!" said he, "wasn't I the *burraidh* not to see it sooner! You're thinking to yourself the house is big up yonder in the glen, and will want a great big woman. You're thinking you're good enough to wed the tongs, but too small for Drimdorran. Fie, shame on ye, Macgregor, child of kings! The rock is not more old than us, nor yet the mountain. There's not one blemish on our tree, and you will make me feel a dog that child of mine should think herself not good enough for a Macmaster, even if he wore the banners!"

"Stop, stop!" she cried, ashamed; "you go too fast for me. For all that there is between us—just a word."

"There's not much need for words at the age of you: it's in the eyes, and I have seen him look at you in yon bit coach of Duncan's till my face was red. By God, you'll marry him! And it's not the tongs will do for Ninian Campbell's daughter!"

The upper buttons of his waistcoat burst; he was inflamed and swollen with injured pride. She picked up one that fell to the floor and polished it along her sleeve; she stood abashed like a little child.

"You put me to my shame, father," she said.

"Yes," he cried, "and you put me to my shame that you should harbour fancy for a lad as poor's a disholout and turn from him with your tail between your legs when you find

he's like to be a landed gentleman. The one thing I will not have in child of mine is that she should be humble! I would sooner have you wicked! I would sooner have you dead!"

"But I am not humble," she said. "It is because I am proud, I do not want a man to marry me because he may think it is his duty, and he is just the man who would. So long as he was poor I had no doubt of him, and I was happy. I would have followed him across the world, but you are going to spoil him for me, bringing back to him Drimdorran. How am I to tell now that he wants me for myself? I'm frightened, father; frightened!"

Ninian rubbed his chin. "My loss!" said he, "that your mother was not to the fore; she maybe could have understood ye! Ye beat me! But one thing I'm determined on—ye'll marry him! An hour ago I couldna let myself think o' ye marryin' anybody, but now we've got this length my mind's made up—I'll never rest till I get proof that Sandy killed his father: that's all that's needed now to get Drimdorran for him. He's bound to marry ye! If I clear this thing up he's under an obligation."

"Oh," she cried, and wrung her hands, "that's just what tortures me! I want no man who's under an obligation, or might think he was!"

She flung from the room in a rage of indignation.

He went round to the Bailie's house. Æneas was out; he had spent the whole day calling upon men who had been friendly with his father to see if any one by chance had had a correspondence with his father after he had gone to France. His uncle went to a man who had been skipper of a barque and knew the port of Havre. MacIver was his name; he had sailed for twenty years with fish in their season to the place and knew what Scottish merchants lived there. In all his time he had never known of one Macfarlane; there had been no such Scottish merchant fourteen years ago in Havre.

"I knew it all along," said Ninian, when the Bailie told him this. "It was the lie of a desperate man, no more in it than there was in the charge that Paul was turncoat. Duncanson was lying right and left, enough to make the green rocks cry. He had your brother killed! And he lost no time about it either. Paul never spent a year in France—the thing's ridiculous! Do you think, Alan, the brother of your blood with a boy here waiting on him would not find some means to get a letter to you in a twelvemonth?"

"But Duncanson would burn them," said Annabel.

"Supposing he did? That might work for a month or two but no' for a year on end. When Paul got no reply from you to the letters he sent through Sandy he would be a stupid man that didna jalouse something and try another post."

"That's true!" said the Bailie. "There was many a

way he might have written us. There was, for one, MacIver."

"But he didna write ye. What way? Because he was dead! That flashed on me the other night when Æneas told me Sandy's story. There was never a penny of Drimdorran rents sent into France; your brother was killed as soon's he got there."

He produced the letter from Paul he had found in Drimdorran House. It had come from Leith with bank-notes paying back a loan with interest. They searched the ledger and found the loan still debited to Paul. It was among the very last of the advances made by Duncanson, and the absence of any allusion to a balance showed that all that had preceded had been also paid.

"That's all I found up-by in Sandy's closet that had the least concern with Paul's affairs. The old rogue—peace be wi' him!—made a clearance. Not a scrap is left to help us. But here's a thing—how came the old man to have this?"

He handed Annabel the snuff-box.

She knew it at once. "Paul's!" she cried with agitation, and opened up the lid. "And that is his wife, my dear Selina."

It was, of all they had lost with Paul, the one thing they had most regretted. To him it had been extravagantly precious. And that Duncanson should have kept it from them seemed the most cruel of his villainies.

"But how came he to have it?" asked Ninian. "That's what puzzled me. It's not a thing a man would forget at a flitting nor make a gift of to his factor."

"Never on earth!" said Annabel. "I *can not* think what way that man should have it."

"There was with it a bit of a woman's hair; it was hers I'll swear. Now what would a man like Duncanson keep these things in his desk for?"

Annabel sighed. "He was one time very fond of her," she said. "Alan, ye remember, told ye?"

"Tach!" said Ninian. "That's a woman's reason, and there's no' much in it. A man like Sandy hasna room in his body for two affections—a dead lass, and a lump of land. He had some other reason for having the box and making such fraca about its loss when he thought her son had taken it. Where did he get it? When did he get it? Tell me that and I'm at the end of my bit string! If Paul had the box with him at Glenshiel we're comin' close on the very hand that slew him. Was it sent from France?"

He gave a start as he asked the question, and beat his breast. "My grief!" he cried, "aren't we the fools to believe one word of Sandy's story when we have proved so much of it is false? *Was Paul in France at all?* Did he ever get out of Scotland? That's the thing I should have questioned from the first! If Paul was killed abroad, and the box

in his possession, nobody would think of sending it to Duncanson. What for should they?"

"He might never have taken it with him to France," said Alan-Iain-Alain Og.

"Na, na!" said his wife. "Ye needna say such a thing to me! Wherever Paul went in the body, he had Selina's picture. He kept it like a watch below his pillow."

"Oh man! if I were only sure he had it in the North!" said Ninian with eagerness, and turned as he said so to the opening door. Æneas entered, looking wearied: he had tramped for hours all round the country, and the first thing that his eyes fell on was the tarnished box he knew in his uncle's hand. He learned with amazement that the portrait was his mother's; he had never seen another.

"That I should not have guessed!" he said as he looked at it again, with moistened eyes. "And now, quite plain, I see myself in her as Lovat did."

Ninian glowered. "What's that ye say?" he shouted. "Did Lovat see this picture?"

"He did indeed, unless there chance to be another."

"There never was!" said Annabel. "And that's what made me long for't many a day."

"Then," said Æneas, "Lovat saw it. He saw it with my father that time at Castle Dounie."

"Are ye sure?" asked Ninian.

"He told me so himself at his dinner-table. You might have heard him. And how, now, comes it in Drimdorran House?"

"I'll tell ye before I'm five hours older!" said the *beachdair;* picked up his hat, and without another word was gone.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—THE COBBLER'S SONG.

He dashed home, spattering through the dubs, for now the rain was falling; found his daughter absent; opened a press, and got a pair of shoes, his own, much worn. These were each thrust in a deep skirt-pocket of his coat, and away he went to the house of a cobbler near the jail.

"Here's a pair of shoes," he said; "put thou fresh heels on them, just man, that I can walk in grandeur. I want them for Drimdorran's funeral."

The cobbler was an old wee man with grizzled whiskers, and lips for ever puckered up for whistling. He was a bard, made ditties, mostly scurrilous, which were sung in taverns. As he sat on a stool and hammered leather on a lap-stool, Ninian set him chanting at a song. It was about a tenant in the glen, and a horse he had neither bred nor bought, yet brought in a cunning way to market; the poet clearly hinted theft.

"Capital!" cried Ninian. "A splendid song! Many a

time, I'm sure, it put a fury on Mackellar. It's a long time now since I heard it last, on a Hogmanay. It came into my head to-day, and I just was wondering to myself did he steal the horse in truth, or was it poetry."

"I'll warrant thee he stole him!" said the bard. "Or else he were a warlock brute got from the waters."

"When was this?" asked Ninian sharply.

"It was twelve—ay, fourteen years ago," said the cobbler. "Son of the Worst! he got a pair of shoes from me when he had drink, and would he pay them, sober? No! I put it before my Maker and was stirred to song. Many a time since then would Mackellar rather he had paid the shoes!"

The *beachdair* left the cobbler in a hurry, and through the driving rain went up to a farm at Tullich. It was Mackellar's farm. The man who had paid so dearly for his shoes was on the hill, but returned in a little while, and Ninian questioned him for nigh an hour.

When he got back to town it was the gloaming. A gale was risen; the woods were rocking, and the rain came down in sheets. It drenched him to the marrow, but he went, all dripping as he was, to Alan-Iain-Alain Og's, and who was there before him but his daughter? Only a desperate interest in his movements would have brought her there.

One word he said when he went in beside them in the parlour—one word only, in a cry, his face like flint, his hand uplifted.

The word was "Havock!"

Between his teeth it sounded like a snarl.

They stood about as he dripped; a pool ran on the carpet.

"At last," he cried, "I have him! It's well he has the linen on his chin, or he would squeal upon the trestles! Now I ken what for he did not like the night and must have candles! Your father, Æneas, filled the dark; outside the candle-light, night roared for vengeance!"

"What did he do to my father?" Æneas cried, trembling.

"He did what I said he did—he killed him! Somewhere in this parish lies your father's bones! Sit down the whole of us, and I'll tell ye how things happened. I'll take my string."

He took out the line so curiously employed to mark his progress in unravelling the secret.

"The way to find out what a rogue would do in a given habble is to be a rogue yourself. In every one of us there is the stuff of roguery as well as grace; good fortune to us if we needna use it! And I said to myself, 'Now, Ninian, if you were Duncanson and bogged so deep in mischief, what lengths would ye go to clear your neck?' Duncanson wanted Drimdorran, and when he couldna get it by fair play he tried the foul. For weeks

he thought that Paul was drowned, and before he learned the truth he had put his head into the hemp. He hashed and haggled at the books; he forged Paul's name; he grabbed the property. And then, *mo chreach!* he got a staggerer! He was no sooner in Drimdorran, laird, and his chair drawn to the fire, than a messenger came one day from the North with dreadful tidings. Paul Macmaster was alive! He was here in the North, with Lovat! He might appear at any hour, though he was papered, and find out how he had been wronged!

"I put myself in his position. 'What's to be done?' I asked the rogue of me. I was there, Drimdorran, at my window, looking out upon my lands, and a letter in my hand, and I saw the scaffold. When a body will see the scaffold he deserves, there is nothing he will shirk to save him. And I said to myself (for mind ye I was Duncanson!), 'There is only one thing for it — Paul must go!'

"Now, how could this be managed? I thought of Simon. Lovat could have shipped him to oblige a friend, the way he shipped yourself and me, Æneas; but he wasna asked, and that of itself looks black. It meant that Duncanson could not feel safe with Paul alive, even though the ocean lay between them. He must die! Lovat is a bad man, and some day he will suffer for it, but he's not the one to risk his neck in a dirty murder for another man, and Duncanson must do the deed himsel'. Your brother never went to France, Alan: he meant to go, but first he meant to come to Inveraray. For a while it puzzled me that Lovat should be ignorant that Paul came this way, but I think that now I have the reason. Paul couldna trust him. No man with his wits about him ever sat with Sim a day without seeing he was a quirky one. Paul would look at that sly face and mind old Lovat's history, and say to himself, 'This man runs double; if he thinks I'm venturing home he'll inform, and they will watch for me.' So he never said a word of Inveraray."

"But all this," broke out Bailie Alan, "is but speculation! What makes ye think Paul came to Inveraray?"

"He would never pass this door without a cry on us!" said Annabel.

Ninian shook his head. "That's the bit!" he said. "I thought of that mysel'. Here were his kin and offspring, and his heart was warm, and he was going to banishment. Would he go past this house at night and not come in? . . . He never passed! The whole thing lies before me like a strath seen from the mountain-top: your brother came down the glen, but never got any farther. . . . Have ye a bite of bread? I've tasted nothing all this day, and now I'm like the wolf."

Annabel put bread before him and some milk.

"But are ye sure, Ninian, that he came this way at all?" the Bailie asked, still doubting.

"As sure as I hear the wave beat on the shore there! When he left Castle Dounie he made straight for here, and met with Duncanson. How did Sandy have the box? When ye told me, Æneas, that Lovat saw the picture with your father, I knew the worst—that Sandy had destroyed him with his own hand! I knew then what the letter meant that Lovat wrote to Duncanson and brought the death to him—he was afraid of Fraser. That man in the Muir of Ord knew something. He must be shipped with us, if Duncanson would sleep.

"Now, I had the good sense to ask the wife of Fraser for his history. Fourteen years ago he was a man of Lovat's. He carried letters. I thought, when she told me that, of Duncanson, and asked if her man had carried letters to Argyll. She told me he had once been there, and it was to Duncanson, with a letter from a gentleman Macmaster. He brought an answer back, and she knew the very day and date; a child was born to her that morning."

"Ah, the poor body!" said Annabel.

"Well, I thought to myself, 'What was that letter? And what for should Sandy want that man trepanned?' I looked at it like this—Paul had affairs with Sandy; he was going abroad; he wanted money; he wrote to Duncanson, his doer, and asked for it. But the thing was far past money with Duncanson; the crying need was death. Oh, man! I saw it all like print! Duncanson said, 'Yes; ye'll have the money; come and get it.' And your father, Æneas, never doubted Sandy. He came to Inveraray! He darena come by day, for his name was at the cross and on the doors o' kirks; he came doun that glen in the dark, and he met with Sandy under cloud of night. Where did they meet? In Drimdorran House?"

"Never on earth!" cried Annabel. "Paul wouldna put a foot in't."

"And that was a thing I thought of, too. They met, I'll swear, in the glen. And then I ask the rogue of me what happened. The scaffold loomed for Duncanson. He had got a property by crime. Here was the only witness, nothing but his breath to make him dangerous. . . . He killed your brother, Alan, there and then!"

"I canna believe it!" cried the Bailie.

"I'm just as sure as if I saw it! It's what I would do myself if I were him. Consider, Alan—search yourself for the savage in you,—here is a glen in dark and loneliness, and a hunted man condemned by law who may bring ye to the scaffold. What for have we got pistol or the dirk except to use them for our own particular skins? . . . Somewhere in Glen Aray, Æneas, your father died! That box was taken from your father's corpse; to keep it was the worst mistake of Sandy."

"You have still produced no evidence that he came here," said Æneas, who was pallid.

"But I have plenty," said the *beachdair*. "A dead man can be buried, or thrown in a linn with a stone tied to his neck, but a horse is not so easy hidden. Your father borrowed a horse from Lovat and never sent it back. What happened to the horse? . . . You ken the tenant in Tullich — Ellar-an-Eich? It came to me, this day, that his by-name came from a song made on him by the cobbler. I knew it but in parts, and I went to the cobbler and made him sing it. It all rose out of a horse Mackellar said he found astray, and nobody believed him. So I went up to Tullich. 'Fourteen years ago,' I says, 'a horse was lost. You sold, about that time, a horse at Kilmichael Market, and I'm curious to ken just where ye got it.'

"He told me there and then. What he said from the first was true—it was a wandered horse, and he found it on a Sunday in his corn, a wise-like well-bred saddle-beast, without a strap on. He put it in his stable for a fortnight, with never a word to any one about his find. It was the very week Paul rode from Inverness; a fortnight later came Kilmichael Market, and Mackellar rode it there in night-time—thirty miles, and got twenty Saxon pounds for it. Of course the thing came out; the whole land kent of it; the cobbler made his song, and the droll thing was there was never a cheep in the shire of a missing horse!

"There's no mistake about it, Alan; that was Lovat's horse, the one he lent your brother! And here's the cope-stone of it — Lovat told ye, Æneas, at his table, that your father, later on, through Duncanson, sent the value of the beast. Your father never did, poor man! The money came out of Sandy's pocket, and he little guessed that after fourteen years the lie would rise against him. Sandy heard, like all the rest, that a horse was found in Tullich, but he never said a word. Yet he paid the value of the horse to Lovat! . . . 'I didna hear ye bark!' MacCailein said. If Duncanson was living now there would be barking, for I have everything except the corp of the man he killed. I see the whole thing but the blow. Was it the dirk or pistol?"

"I canna follow ye!" said Alan-Iain-Alain Og, confused.

"Then I'll make it plainer for ye, Alan, and I'll start again wi' Paul in Castle Dounie. He knew he must henceforth stay abroad, and the quicker he was gone the better. Of all the realm of Albyn this parish was most dangerous for him; let him show in Inveraray and his kail was cooked. But he was bound to come here for two things—first to see his child, and next, for money. He wrote to Duncanson to fix a meeting; Fraser took the letter, and brought back an answer. The place of meeting and the hour were fixed. It must be in the night, ye'll mind! Paul darena venture here in daytime. And I wouldna say, when I think of it, but Sandy warned him no'

to give his plans to Lovat; that's what I would do in plotting murder. So Paul set out on the borrowed horse wi' the silver-mounted saddle.

"He came over Glen Aray in the dark, and his foe was waiting. It was somewhere in the glen; it couldna be Drimdorran. He took Macmaster unawares, with dag or dagger, and I'll swear it was the dagger in the back, for that's the Clan Maclean! Then he riped the dead man's pouches; got, with other things, the snuff-box; lest earth or water should give up the body he must leave no single thing on it to show that it was Paul's. What he did with the body God Almighty knows, and the woods are wide and thick, and Aray deep, but he put with it the harness of the horse, and lashed the brute back on the road it came. It went into Mackellar's corn that morning, and good for us it did, and that the cobbler made a song!"

All this the *beachdair* gave in gusts that left no chance for question; he was like a man possessed. The steam rose from his clothing; a flush was on his cheek-bones, and his knees were trembling; Janet stared at him with a face white as the *Cannoch*.

And none of them for a while could speak.

Æneas was first to find his tongue in a stifled way.

"I'm thinking of the doocot," he said, and Janet flinched, with her father's eye on her.

"I'll warrant ye I thought of that, but there's nothing in the dooçot, and it stands on rock."

"It's just the very place that Paul himsel' would fix on for a tryst," said Alan. "Many a night they spent beside its fire."

Ninian gave a start. "That's just what I was goin' to ask," he said. "Ye talked before about a fire, but fire was never there unless it was a chaffer."

"It wasna any chaffer, but a fireplace and a chimney; I've dried my feet at it when I was at the hares; ye'll see't unless you're blind."

Ninian jumped to his feet. "Blind, indeed!" said he. "But I have my nose! Æneas, did I no' tell ye I could smell the soot? And now I must go up and look again."

"Let me go with you," Æneas said.

"Na, na! You'll just take Jennet home, and I'll come back again. I'll not can sleep till this is settled."

CHAPTER XXXVII.—DIRK.

Of them all there was no one more disturbed by Ninian's story and the stress of his emotions than his daughter. She was so wan and broken when he left them, Annabel took pity, motherly wrapped her up in a hood, and made Æneas convoy her home. It was nine o'clock; rain teemed;

the street was quite deserted; melancholy drenched the night. And there and then, as they went through it, she with a hand on the crook of his arm, it seized on Æneas that all of steadfastness for him, security, and faith were, in this vexed and mocking world, dependent upon her. All else was meantime reeling for him, he walked on quicksands; every hour brought some new consternation, and now he had a fresh one—he was not so sure of her feelings to him as he had dared at times to be. Like Annabel, he scented doubts. Could the horror of the crimes her father tracked have influenced the change in her?—she was aloof, evasive, and yet, two nights ago, she stood surrendered in his arms!

"What is it ails you?" he asked her suddenly. They were come to her doorstep; another moment and she was gone unless he acted quickly.

"I'm tired," she said. "I'm in a stupor. This dreadful business——"

Remorse took hold of him. "I know, my dear," he said; "I know! It would shake the rock, and I am a fool to think you could be calmer than myself. Just for a little, there, I had a fear that I was grown distasteful to you."

His hand was on her shoulder. A fanlight on the doorway dimly lit the porch from a lamp within. The gale blew up the lane with noises of the sea; they occupied a privacy of storm. The crimson hood was slipped back from her head, and her face was wet with rain. Her eyes were troubled; she was dumb; he drew her close to him; she leaned against him for a moment, and he felt a wild heart-flutter, and then she shrank back from him, pushing with her hands against his breast.

"No, no!" she whispered; "that is by with! My far-too-clever father has put an end to that!" and Æneas was dismayed.

"Has he, faith?" he said, and bridled. "I feared what *you* might think, but I never dreamt your father would let that affect him."

"What?" she asked in wonder.

"This — this nightmare in my history, my father's downfall; this appalling mystery. What blame have I? Am I the worse a man for it that you or yours should shun me like a plague? It's not what I would look for from Macgregors — God knows your people, like my own, have died in ugly ways. But I'll have it out with him! This thing is far more vital to me than his search for bones."

At this she changed immediately. Distant no more, she nestled to him. "Æneas," she whispered, "you know my father just as little as I knew you till now! Forget what I said; it was all in error."

Her face was cold and wet; the rain was in her hair; his own face, burning, found in their contact, in their moisture, in their chill, a delight that was almost aching. It is in fires that love is withered, but

not in fires that keep a surface damp and cool with clean night-air and storm, and Æneas with his lips on her, drank bliss.

"How *can* we—how *can* we be happy?" she gasped at last. "At such a time! Are we not wicked?"

"No," said Æneas gravely; "the world must aye go on. Weeping may endure a night for death and wrong, but love's the morning; we begin afresh. And you will think me a strange man that every fresh discovery of your father's makes me the sorrier for that poor wretch who surely never knew what love was, and can never learn it now. It was not my father's life was marred, but Duncanson's; my father's death was glorious compared with his, even if it were as your father thinks. It's for the sake of that poor clay I hope it wasna."

"You may be sure my father's right," said Janet quietly. "This time he'll find what he is wanting."

"In the doocot?"

She nodded.

"Tell me why you say so."

"I know! I have known it for a week."

"But how?" he cried.

"For not one reason you will listen to, Æneas, but the foolish first was that I loathed the doocot. I hated it since ever I guessed that you were there that night with Margaret, and when my father told me how your troubles started there, I seemed in a flash to see what Duncanson had done. My father might talk about France and your father dying there, but someway I could think of nothing but the doocot, and Duncanson's cold fishy hand. Believe me, Æneas, that's where your father lies!"

He soothed her agitation; she was shaken like a leaf. "You should have told your father what you thought," he urged, but gently.

"I daren't!" she said. "I was afraid. I hoped he never would discover; my happiness looked like depending on his not discovering. And you need not ask me now for why; I'm too ashamed to tell you. Some say——"

"Ah, never mind!" he said in a gush of sudden pity at her turmoil.

He had no faith in her intuitions, and even from Ninian's search expected little. When he got back to the house, he found them there of the same opinion — that the *beachdair's* reasoning had gaps in it patched up with mere surmise.

But the first glance at Ninian's face, when he returned, confounded them. It was grey as ashes. He looked at Annabel strangely, and she left the room.

"Well," said Æneas, sick at the heart, "did you find anything further?"

"*Mo creach!* I did: Drimdorran!" Ninian answered. "Sit you down; my hank's unravelled."

"Was it there?" cried Æneas. The name that Ninian gave him was portentous.

"No other place!" said

Ninian, solemn. "The first thing you will do, Drimdorran, is, destroy that tower. Leave not a stone of it upon another!"

He sat with his hands on his lap, and stared at the fire; the gale whooped in the chimney.

"One thing I overlooked," he said, "and it was very stupid of me. It never crossed my mind that Duncanson could build, though I kent he had some skill with the saw and hammer. It was his own hand blocked the pigeon-holes. The only wright about the place at the time was old Carmichael, and he never knew the place was boarded up. Another mistake I made was not to trust my nose that I smelled the soot. When first you talked about a fire, Alan, I thought ye meant a chaffer in the middle of the floor, for I saw no sign of chimney or fireplace in the walls——"

"But the fire was there! I know!" said the Bailie.

"Of course it was! I found it half an hour ago. He had built the fireplace up! I found the very trowel he had used to spread his mortar! He built it up with rubble, pushed the bin against the place, and locked the door for fourteen years. But, my God! ye canna lock a door on terror! No wonder he kept the plaid tacked on his window in the latter days, with the tomb before his eyes. . . . I took a pick, when I found a place, and broke the wall, and the first thing I came on was a rotten saddle."

He held out his hand on a sudden; on its palm was a piece of metal.

"I cut that from the leather," he said; "it's part of the silver mounting—a buck's head wi' a motto—Lovat's crest!"

"And—and was there more?" asked Æneas, parched.

"There was," the *beachdair* answered. "At least your father may rest at the last in good Scots clods; it was what I said—the dirk!"

THE END.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF FEDERALISM—ENGLAND FOR THE ENGLISH—EXAMPLES OF THE PAST—THE CIVIL SERVANT—A NEW ART OF BIOGRAPHY.

WHEN the ill-omened Home Rule Bill was introduced into the House of Commons, we were told that it was a first step to Federalism. Remembering the preamble of the Parliament Bill and the notorious debt of honour, which has not been paid, we did not believe in the sincerity of the Cabinet. The Home Rule Bill was framed not to advance the policy of Federalism, not to save the Commons' House from a congestion of business, but to satisfy the demands of Mr Redmond. The Cabinet, which thought nothing of breaking its pledged word to the country, dared not disobey the Irishmen, who, against their will and conviction, had helped Mr George to pass his ineffective Budget. And even if the Cabinet had ever entertained any hope of Federalism, which may be doubted, they made their Bill an effectual bar to any such system of Union. While Federalism was on their tongue, they would give Ireland the free control of her taxation, with a separate Post Office, and thus make Federalism for ever impossible.

And now that the Home Rule Bill has brought the Cabinet face to face with Civil War, on either side we hear fresh murmurs of Federalism. Here, cry the sanguine, is a way out of the blind alley into which the reckless and interested folly of the Radicals has plunged us. Let us make the pretence of the Cabinet a reality, they say in effect, and exclude Ulster until a real measure of Federalism be passed. But at the very outset a difficulty appears. Shall Ireland be two units or one? One unit, declare the Home Rulers, and thus by postulating an undivided and indivisible Ireland, they begin the old argument all over again.

What, then, is the system of Federalism which is expected to extricate us from all our difficulties — even from the monstrous folly of the Cabinet? Federalism is a union of several States, which combine for the common objects of policy and commerce, under one central government. The States are left free to manage their local affairs, and look to the central government for guidance in all that affects their national security and ambition. They are thus asked to obey two sets of laws—those which they pass themselves for their own convenience, and those which the Federal Government passes for

the safety and advantage of them all. One for commerce and defence, they are separate in the plainer conduct of their lives. Free trade within the Union and a common army are essential conditions of a prosperous federation. A writer in 'The Morning Post' has recently divided the functions of the lesser Parliaments and the Imperial House, in an article which makes the object of Federalism clear enough. The district Parliament — a kind of glorified County Council — would control —

Education, literary and technical.
Police.
Railways and other methods of communication.
Factory and all other Industrial legislation.
Insurance, Poor Relief, Old Age Pensions, and Public Charity.
Housing and Land Settlement.
District trade and markets, with no right of discrimination against another district.

On the other hand, the Imperial Parliament would reserve to itself control of —

The Army and Navy.
Relations with the Self-Governing Dominions and Foreign Countries.
Government of India and the Crown Colonies.
Administration of Justice.
The Tariff and the Collection of all national Taxes.
All regulation of overseas trade and shipping; fisheries.
Posts and Telegraphs.
Right of Veto on any Act of a District Parliament.

There is a brief schedule in the partition of duties, and from it we may learn what Federalism would mean to us and to the Empire.

The history of Federalism is old and honourable. It carries us back to the dim past of ancient Greece. It was, as we know, in modern times the solution of the difficulties and dangers which after the Rebellion seemed likely to overwhelm the newly-emancipated American colonies. Under the auspices of Lord Durham it saved Canada from disruption. And if we apply it to Great Britain and Ireland, we shall discern therein some obvious advantages. England especially, did she take a merely selfish view, might be expected to favour it. For many years she, the predominant partner, has been prevented by a coalition of Scots, Irish, and Welsh malcontents from having her own way, or from settling her affairs in accord with her own sentiments and ambitions. By temperament England is, and has always been, intensely Conservative. She has always displayed a wholesome power of reaction. It was the plain necessity of her nature which decreed that Charles II. should be restored to the throne after the brief rule of Oliver Cromwell. She walks most happily in the ancient ways, and by the hazard of parliamentary coalitions she is driven headlong down the slope of reck-

less, unknowing Radicalism. To her at least Federalism might bring relief. She would once more be mistress in her own house, free to preserve her cherished remnants of feudalism, and to obey the wise, stern voice of tradition. Again, for that congestion of Parliament, which is said to impede the deliberations of the elected of the People, Federalism might prove a remedy. When Railway Bills and Factory Acts, when all those measures of relief and pauperism, which serve to buy the demagogue votes at the public expense, are relegated to district assemblies, the House of Parliament would be free to meditate upon weightier matters of policy, to strengthen our defences, and to knit closer the bonds which bind us to our colonies and to our friends abroad. This argument, specious as it its, would appear stronger if we had any faith in the wisdom and loyalty of Parliament. Perhaps the best security which a single chamber, elected by the popular vote and unchecked by a powerful Upper House, could give us is the security of impotence.

Before we discuss the disadvantages of Federalism, let us remember that the system that has proved successful elsewhere need not of necessity bring blessings to Great Britain. There is a piece of advice given by Pericles to the Athenians and quoted by Mr F. S. Oliver in his 'Alexander Hamilton,' which we should do well to ponder. "Our State," said Pericles, "does not enter enviously into a comparison with the laws and systems of others. We do not imitate them; rather we provide them with an example." And Great Britain, of all countries in the world, is least suited to bold political experiments. The march of our development has always and happily been slow. We have advanced with dignified deliberation from precedent to precedent. Like all honourable men we have proudly acknowledged the wholesome domination of the past. Even when we have made a change we have sometimes been fortunate enough to preserve the ancient order under the new form. If you would wish to measure the danger of revolution to Great Britain, you have but to look at the fatal consequences of the Parliament Act, passed by a Cabinet which contains a Welshman, a Jew, and a Minister who carries American blood in his veins,—by men, in fact, who did not inherit a natural sympathy with the aims and ambitions of Great Britain. The Parliament Act has brought us, as we prophesied it would bring us, at its first passage, in sight of civil war. And it should warn us of the risk we run, when for the mere purpose of convenience we attempt to mend or to destroy our ancient Constitution.

We are to-day a Union. In spite of agitators and of secret societies, England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland, form one undivided whole against the world. If we adopt a Federal system, we must

begin with disintegration. What shall it profit ourselves to pull the fabric of union to pieces merely to put it together again? And when we have pulled the fabric to pieces we shall not have satisfied the demands of Mr Devlin and his Molly Maguires. The very essence of Federalism is the majesty of the sovereign power. Ireland, under devolution, will be as far from being a separate and hostile nation, to which state she aspires, as ever. She will not be able to use her Custom House as an instrument of revenge against England. She will not be able to discriminate in favour of her friends and paymasters across the Atlantic. Her Nationalists will not be able to bleed Ulster white as a punishment for recalcitrancy. And she will repudiate Federalism, as she will repudiate anything else that is offered her agitators except complete independence and the right of hostility to Great Britain.

Moreover, when we look to the examples of the past and point with satisfaction to the triumphs of Federalism, let us reflect that, quite apart from differences of temperament and tradition, its success was due in two conspicuous instances to the genius of its initiators. What the United States owed to the genius and persistence of Alexander Hamilton all the world knows. Had not Lord Durham most courageously allowed Edward Gibbon Wakefield, the wisest Colonial statesman that ever we bred, to inspire his famous report, the fortune of Canada might have been far less happy. Have we in our present Government a Hamilton or a Wakefield, who by tact and policy can smooth out the difficulties and soften the asperities which are inherent in a federal system? Of course we have not. Even if our present Cabinet believed honestly in Federalism, which it does not, it could not frame a federal constitution. It has neither the brains nor the morals to achieve so high an enterprise. Demagogues who have talked such nonsense as Messrs George and Churchill have flung at their dupes in the country are incapacitated from devising or carrying great reforms. Besides, it would be absurd if the Cabinet, after the events of the last few years, expected the country to put trust in its good faith. If Federalism were found to be a solution of our difficulties, it could be accomplished only by men of cool heads and honest hearts, who put the good of the country before the profit of party, and who forget in statesmanship the mere chance of a tactical victory. It would demand not only honest statesmen, but many years of unselfish toil. To attempt to tack so vast a constitutional change, as a makeweight, upon an unpopular Bill is to plumb the depths of human folly. The dangers of Federalism are obvious—a slackening of justice, an impaired solidarity, a perpetual conflict between the interests of the part and the interests

of the whole. You cannot compensate for those by a hastily-constructed measure, which shall embody not the sincere wisdom of patriots, but the accumulated prejudices of interested partisans. And what shall we say of a Federalism which leaves out of account the sympathies and hopes of our Dominions oversea? To satisfy their aspirations, to bring them within the circle of a common tariff and a common system of defence, would be worth years of discussion and a great sacrifice. We should resist any hasty attempt to federalise the United Kingdom, made with no other object than to extricate the worst Government of modern times from the pit of its own digging. And is not our Government still supposed to be representative? Then what becomes of the mandate? Will the supporters of the new plan declare that Federalism also had a place in the election addresses of its newest converts?

The Report of the Commission on the Civil Service, recently published, proves as clearly as the lamentable conduct of the Cabinet that the government of the country is no longer a means to an end, but an end itself. While the Commission has been deliberating, the Civil Service Estimates have increased from £46,787,873 to £57,065,816, or eleven millions more than the total expenditure of the nation as set forth in the budget of 1842; and for aught we know they have by this time securely rounded the Cape of sixty millions. Our present governors have so little imagination, so little faith in the people, that when they detect what they believe to be an abuse, they instantly organise an office and pack it with patient, unambitious clerks. The truth is, that having entered upon the fatal path of democracy, we are fast becoming a nation of officials. In this wholesale manufacture of paid posts, autocracy and democracy join hands. The countries whose energies are most seriously paralysed by bureaucratic indolence are Russia and France. The autocrat hopes by conferring small salaries upon a vast army of inefficient persons to make his own position securer. The democrat is sure that no better system has ever been invented to keep the people in subjection than the multiplication of government offices, which besides fitting a trusty band of voters with jobs provide places at the top for needy partisans. The gloomiest of all the professions, the Civil Service, may boast a few comfortable rewards; and again and again it has seen these snatched from it, that a post might be found for some party hack who has fought a bye-election, or a miscreant who has ratted at the right moment. There is no more melancholy passage in the Commission's report—from the point of view of the Civil Servant—than that in which it deplores one practice of the Government. "In a minority

of cases," it says, "gentlemen have been appointed from outside the Civil Service, and amongst these are some whose previous careers suggest no obvious qualification for the duties of the official positions concerned. At the present time, when patronage as a normal system of recruiting has been generally abandoned for more than a generation in favour of a system which purports to open a career to talent, we regard appointments of this kind as an anachronism. They are disheartening, and give colour to the suspicion that governments may attach greater value to personal service to a particular Minister than to lifelong efficient service to the State." We condole sincerely with the officials who, having sacrificed their lives to a dull routine, find the prizes snatched from their grasp at last. But what is the Government to do? If it be deprived of its patronage, what loaves and fishes shall it find to throw to its henchmen?

Nearly sixty millions a-year spent upon the Civil Service! No private firm would tolerate so great an extravagance as this sum implies for a single year. But public money is notoriously slippery, and our Ministers, chiefly amateurs not bred to the business, esteem wastefulness a virtue. There must, however, be a breaking-point, and if democratic government becomes much costlier, it must be replaced by an honester, more economical system. We have heard, in private enterprises, of an official called a "cutter," whose duty it is to detect and mitigate reckless expenditure. If such a one were let loose in our Government offices, he could reduce the bill, we are sure, by many millions. And it is not only the waste of money that we deplore, it is the waste of men. We are spending over a million a-week on what is, to a large extent, unproductive labour. We are creating a class of sad, patient, obsequious men, who throughout the miserable certainty of their lives will keep the same hours, hold the same thoughts, enjoy the same official holidays, will know plenty as little as they know want, and will slip out of their office, like a cog out of a machine, to be replaced by something equally serviceable and equally inhuman.

It is with a profound pity that we contemplate their careers; with a pity all the more profound because we believe that half the work that they do is unnecessary. For a pittance they renounce all the adventure and uncertainty of life. From the very moment that they enter a government office they are comfortably sheltered. They have the assurance that, with decent morals, they will never starve. The long years stretch before them, bleak and monotonous, each marked by a constant "rise," until, if they are very fortunate, they reach what we believe is known in their own cant as "four figures," and presently retire upon a comfortable pension, still comparatively young in

years, but so sadly unused to initiative as to be unfit for any work of their own. Then, as they mount to the higher offices or are enrolled among the private secretaries, it is their gloomy privilege to attend official banquets, to rub shoulders with Ministers, the elect of the people, whom they, the permanent officers, must instruct in their unaccustomed duties, and serve for the brief season of their sojourn with flattering obedience. In other words, they must do the work and bestow the credit, such as it is, elsewhere, and find solace in the sixty millions annually devoted to their support.

The findings of the Commission are in the main what we should expect. It does not quarrel with any "fundamental principles"; it applauds the organisation without reserve. Meanwhile those who sign the report of the majority "take the opportunity of saying that the actions which, over a series of years, have been taken to improve the Civil Service has, in our judgment, resulted in the creation of a competent, zealous, and upright body of public officers. To this result, we have no doubt, the system of open competition has most materially contributed." We do not know upon what facts this favourable view of competitive examination is based. Are the Commissioners sure that in the old days of patronage, when the Civil Service did not cost sixty millions a-year, the country was ill-served? The truth is that competitive examination is, like universal suffrage, a complete confession of failure. It is only when our governors are unable to make a wise choice of those who should serve them, that they resort to expedients and shift responsibilities. If competitive examination has been a success, its success is a mere accident. The patrons of old had just as good a chance of finding the right man as a set of examiners, and when they had the privilege of appointing worthy gentlemen to sinecures, they used it with generosity and discretion. The sinecures, far less costly than the reckless system of to-day, at least gave to distinguished writers the opportunity of a dignified old age. We would far rather see an income bestowed upon an elegant writer, such as Congreve, than millions wasted in superfluous officials.

There is one inevitable consequence of competitive examination which does not appear to be noticed in the Report. Those who pass the ordeal are provided for in a tepid fashion until death calls them. What of those who spend some years of their life in attempting to dodge the examiners? They have wasted their time more effectually than they would had they been caddies on a golf-course. When their last trial is past they are thrown back upon themselves tired and useless. It is not thus that a wise country squanders its most valuable material, the men and women of its breed. We

should like to have the figures before us and know for certain how many fail for one who succeeds. What the Civil Service costs in money we have been told. It would be yet more instructive to discover what it costs in ruined hopes and wasted endeavour.

Some of the recommendations of the Commission seem to lie far beyond the scope of their inquiry. For instance, it is suggested that "greater facilities should be provided, especially in England and Ireland, from the Primary to the Secondary Schools, and thence to the Universities, of pupils capable of benefiting by secondary and university training respectively." If the Universities are the delectable haunts of jobbery and snobbery, as is said, why should there be a general desire to go to them? It is easy enough to detect here a political bias. The educational ladder is one of the hopes of the Labour Party. It is already so securely set up that any one who has the talent may easily climb it. In other words, a career is open to all. But when you propose to turn the ladder into a highway, to use the image of a mob orator, you assume that all are equally capable of education, and that virtue exists nowhere else than in a board school. In other words, you are making an appeal to class prejudice, with which the Civil Service has nothing, and should have nothing, to do. Its business is to choose, by the sorry means of competitive examination, the men it believes best fitted for its job. It is not asked to inquire into the antecedents of the competitors, or to prefer the board school to Eton. Its business is with the finished product alone, and it would have been wiser to leave the educational ladder out of its report.

Again, it suggests that "there should be closer co-ordination between the educational systems of the country and the Civil Service examinations." This may well be advisable, but it is the Civil Service which must do the co-ordinating. In spite of its annual expenditure of sixty millions, the Civil Service still exists for the country, not the country for the Civil Service. That may come presently. Meanwhile the educational systems of Great Britain will, we trust, evolve themselves as they think best, as though there were no such things as Treasury Clerks in existence, and in the full consciousness that there are other and worthier ambitions to be set before youth than the prospect of spending some forty years of routine in the seclusion of a Government office.

The multifarious suggestions flung down will meet with approval or rejection according to the temperament of the reader. For instance, we cordially hope that the Celtic languages of the United Kingdom will never be included into the syllabus of examination. Why should we yield an obvious advantage to the Welsh, at whose hands we have already suffered too bitterly? On the other hand

we welcome gratefully the proposal that one year "in respect of the age limits" should be conceded to candidates who have taken the full course in the Officers' Training Corps. We did not expect to find in the Commission's report so signal a recognition of the principles of Lord Willoughby de Broke's bill. At any rate, here is plenty of material for discussion, and as we lay aside the report, our keenest hope is that another Commission shall shortly be appointed, not to consider the conditions, but the instant reduction of the Civil Service. No country can permanently sustain the loss in men and money, more devastating than war, which is incurred year by year by the purchase for sixty millions of highly educated, duly examined, and enterprising officials.

Mr Henry James has invented a new art of biography. It is an art of atmosphere. What his brothers and he achieved is indicated in the subtlest fashion. In his 'Notes of a Son and Brother' (London: Macmillan & Co.), the second volume of his great work, he does not often trouble the reader with direct statements of fact. He asks us to look at the past through a haze of memory which blurs the sharp edges of life, and composes even discordant elements into a gracious whole. Above all, he has the skill to put upon paper the sensation which, half unconsciously, we cherish of that which has happened to us. The lapses of remembrance, the guarding of this event, the omission of that, the many accidental preferences of human nature,—all these are indicated with the greatest delicacy, and by a process which is not easy to discover. We might hazard the suggestion that Mr James contrives his wonderful effects by constantly qualifying what he wishes to say. He is as little positive as life itself, and thus is able to give a vivid impression of life. His sentences, into which mitigating clauses are ingeniously dovetailed, and which sometimes seem to set out for one goal and to reach another, chime with the uncertainty of this earthly existence. We do but dimly understand events as they pass before us. We frame dogmatic opinions about them when they live only in our memory. But Mr James, careful not to be dogmatic, reproduces what he has seen, and heard, and known, wrapt in the speculative atmosphere which enveloped it when it was first presented to his ear and eye and mind. And the choice of these memories, which he thinks should not be lost, show his uniform inclination to things of the spirit. Even when, by his own account, he was fumbling after his own talent, it was already literature which engrossed him. For him "the enrichments of life," "the large arrivals," are the masterpieces of fiction. "For these appearances," he writes, "these strong time-marks in such stretches of production

as that of Dickens, that of Thackeray, that of George Eliot, had in the first place simply a genial weight and force, a direct importance, and in the second a command of the permeable air and the collective sensibility with which nothing since has begun to deserve comparison." The coming of the first 'Cornhill' wakes him to enthusiasm. "With which wild memories they stand out for me too," he says, "the lively importance, that winter, of the arrival, from the first number, of the orange-covered 'Cornhill'—the thrill of each composing item of that first number especially recoverable in its intensity." These are the real events which mark our progress through life, and few are the biographers who prefer them to the *faites divers* of the newspapers, or the solemn announcements of deaths and marriages.

Mr James's method is peculiarly well suited to the delineation of character. His brother, William James, is still the hero of his book, and a very brilliant enjoying hero he appears upon Mr James's canvas. Nothing is more striking in these 'Notes' than the sympathetic acceptance by his family of whatever William James might do. He turned from art to science to a chorus of approval. There is no hint of fatherly displeasure at his rejection of the craft to which he had been trained. On either side there was whole-hearted affection and perfect trust. Mr James's father, absolute in sympathy and understanding, is as fine a study as his brother, suggested rather than drawn. And hovering over all is the gallant, pathetic figure of May Temple, a cousin, who faces death with a high-hearted courage and brave cheerfulness which it is pleasant to contemplate. And even those who appear but a moment, are all sketched with a separate truth and firmness. Here, for instance, is a phrase about a cousin at Harvard, who died in battle at Chancellorsville, a phrase which sets him before us for always: "He made all life for the hour a foreground, and one that we none of us would have quitted for a moment while he was there."

We cannot take leave of Mr James's book without celebrating his marvellous skill in the building of long sentences. And his long sentences are not merely collections of short ones; each of them is a definite and organic whole. As we read his book, we were reminded irresistibly of Stéphane Mallarmé, a writer as far as possible from Mr James in the aim and theory of his art, and yet at one with him in the determination to make a style that was his own, and to shun, like the plague, the short, crisp manner of Voltaire.

THE AGRARIAN STAR CHAMBER.

"ARBITRARY Courts of Justice, particularly one termed the Star Chamber, afforded the King the means of punishing those who opposed themselves to the Royal will," is Sir Walter Scott's concise summary of one of the most potent influences in producing the sense of intolerable grievance that eventuated in "the Great Rebellion," and brought on the three kingdoms "an Iliad of woes." A later historian writes—

> "The extraordinary Courts bequeathed by the Tudors to the Stuarts—*i.e.*, the Star Chamber, the Court of High Commission, and the Council of the North—had never been so active and so severe. . . . The Act of Revocation in Scotland, the perambulation of the forests in England, the projected Connaught plantation in Ireland, were so many proofs that neither length of possession, nor unquestioned loyalty, nor the faith of the Sovereign himself, could secure any man in the peaceable enjoyment of his estate."

Substitute for the Royal will the *fiat* of the oligarchy of party politicians, mainly lawyers of more or less professional position, who now in the name of democracy

> "With armed heel
> Bestride the Commonweal;"

for the Connaught Plantation, the Radical Irish Land Acts; for the perambulation of the forests, the Land Inquiry Committee and the "ruthless" and reckless calumnies of its principal promoter; for the Act of Revocation, the Small Landholders (Scotland) Act; and for the faith of the Sovereign, the guarantee of the Common Law and of Acts of Parliament, which have invited and encouraged large outlays and commitments on the faith of undoubted and unfettered ownership—and the parallel to present-day conditions stands out curiously complete.

The constant complaint of Whig Constitutionalists under the later Stuart kings was directed not against the limited monarchy of Britain, but against the exercise of "arbitrary power," and the first remedy adopted by the Long Parliament was that "the oppressive Courts in which arbitrary proceedings had taken place were abolished."

Nearly two years' administration of the Small Landholders (Scotland) Act of 1911 has provided important sections of the Scottish community with an experience as alarming as it is novel to British conceptions of a Court of Justice, of what it means to be placed under the unfettered domination of a tribunal as arbitrary in its exercise of power as it is in its conceptions of right and wrong between man and man. When that measure passed into law by means of a compromise between the two great political parties in the House of Commons, it was felt by many that unfortunate and regrettable as

was the interference with free contract in the occupation of land in the Lowlands of Scotland, and the possible embarrassment and disorganisation of the management of agricultural estates, yet that if the Act was fairly administered by an impartial tribunal, rural economy would adjust itself with as little friction as possible to the new conditions, and that some sacrifice might well be borne for what was understood to be a settlement, in order that the land might have rest from political agitation. The facts that the tribunal was to be a "Court" and not a "Commission," and that its head was expressly given the rank and tenure of a Judge of the Court of Session, appeared to afford some guarantee of judicial impartiality and dignity. But as a monarch may make a man a nobleman but cannot make him a gentleman, so in the case of the Land Court, the "rank and tenure" have failed to provide either the impartiality or the dignity. In the early days of the Court's proceedings, complaints were frequent of the discourtesy with which the agents and factors of landowners were treated, and the daily press was enriched by revelations of a habit of mind vouchsafed in frequent interpositions by the nimble-witted and *bizarre* personality of the President.

The original Crofters Act of 1886 was defended, and to some extent justified, by the peculiar circumstances of the Highland counties to which it applied, where, though not based on legal right, there had existed a sort of customary hereditary tenure, where there still remained, though in course of modification by modern education and the call of the larger life in the towns and on fertile virgin soil, made audible by the Press and the emigration agent, and easily responded to owing to increased facilities of communication, an engrained attachment to the particular plot of ancestral soil, and where the equipment with buildings, such as it was, had been as a general rule the work of the tenant or his predecessors in the same family. In the Lowlands the circumstances were very different. The ordinary law of landlord and tenant, based not on feudal ideas but on the Roman law of contract, was in active and well-understood operation, the tenant of a small holding moved on frequently to another and often a larger one, and on most estates the bulk of the buildings had been either originally erected or paid for on a change or renewal of tenancy by the proprietor. It was under the system of free contractual occupation, with the maintenance of the permanent fertility of the soil secured by judicious Estate Regulations, that the great development of Scottish agriculture had taken place which made it second to none, and the agricultural community had been carried successfully through the period of depression caused

by unlimited American competition in British markets. There was no eviction grievance, no general complaint of the conditions on Lowland estates, and nothing like the agitation of the Highland Land League. The local agitation of the early "eighties," run by large farmers and engineered by a knot of minor politicians in touch with Irish Land Leaguers at Westminster, had fizzled out very quickly. Where the existing system pressed hardly under modern conditions, a remedy had been afforded and any legitimate grievance redressed by the Agricultural Holdings Acts, and the relief which agricultural depression required had been given by large and voluntary reductions of rent by the landowners or by natural and economic adjustment when leases expired or were renewed. Brighter prospects were dawning for Scottish agriculture, and in many counties rents, though not approaching the figures in the heyday of prosperity when competition for farms was extravagant, were again on the rise.

If in these circumstances it was considered necessary to interfere with the old Scottish system of full ownership, on the faith of which the landowners had incurred heavy and continuing obligations for the development of their estates, and of free occupancy under nineteen years' leases, affording a reasonable security of tenure to the cultivator, and at the same time flexibility and adaptability to changing conditions, it was essential to justice and success that the tribunal to be set up should be one commanding the confidence of all classes composing the agricultural interest, and that its administration, dealing with complex and far-reaching conditions, should be conducted with caution, with a careful regard to existing as well as to newly conferred rights, and with strict impartiality. It was above all necessary that the head of the tribunal should be a man possessing the temperament of the judge and not of the advocate, and who could be trusted to practise the counsel of Bacon that "an over-speaking judge is no well-tuned cymbal." The worst possible selection for impartial dealing with the definite and practical conditions of high-class Lowland agriculture was to be found in a faddist or theorist panting to substitute his personal ideas for actual legal rights recognised and acted on for centuries, bitten with the loose notions of Trans-Grampian Land Leaguers, and combining the intellectual ingenuity of a sophistical dialectician with conceptions of the rights of owners of land resembling those entertained by the Highland caterans of former days as to property in cattle.

When the appointments to the new Land Court were announced, they were not such as either to invite general con-

fidence or to inspire general distrust. The Sheriff and Professor selected for elevation in rank and tenure was known in legal circles as a somewhat erratic genius, the course of whose orbit it would be difficult to forecast, a voluminous pleader of metaphysical subtlety, and a Radical ex-candidate for a Highland constituency in which the forces at his back had been mainly those actuated by local land hunger and its political exploitation. But the experience of Sheriff Brand had shown that responsibility and acquired knowledge produced a steadying effect, and it was hoped that the high judicial *status* was intended not merely as a prophylactic against Parliamentary criticism, but as an indication of true judicial character and methods.

As regards the lay members of the Court, there did not exist the public reputation that qualified to form an opinion; and probably the prevailing state of mind of Scottish landowners, whose families had managed and developed their estates on practical lines for generations, of the skilled and experienced chamberlains, commissioners, and factors who followed land agency as a scientific profession, and of the large tenant-farmers whose highly cultivated fields and proportioned steadings were menaced, was one of open-minded inquiry, "Who are those men who have been made judges and dividers over us?"

The experience of practically the first two years of the Act and of the Court has cleared up any doubts as to the character and impartiality of the administrators. It has produced a widespread feeling that it is difficult for a landowner to obtain ordinary justice in the Land Court or fair treatment from the Board of Agriculture. It has shown that the Land Court is essentially an "arbitrary" tribunal, that its members are determined to "ride upon the top of their Commission," and that the convenience of, or the loss inflicted on, those who have to suffer some sacrifice under the legislation is lightly regarded. Like other bureaucratic bodies created by recent Acts of Parliament, the Court has exhibited great alacrity, where the matter was in doubt, in extending the scope of its own jurisdiction. It has, on the other hand, displayed equal readiness and considerable ingenuity in whittling down and restricting, or by its practical judgment rendering nugatory, provisions limiting the inroads upon owner's rights. Its rules of procedure tie the landowner down to short shrift in meeting allegations, but he may be kept in suspense for months while the Court delays its judgment. The practical inspections of holdings have been often cursory, and in some cases farcical. The reductions of rent have been wholesale, indiscriminate, and huge.

The main purpose put forward for the passage of the Small Landholders Act was to stem the diminution of the

rural population by the creation of new small holdings. There was undoubtedly in some counties a deficiency of these, and room for a judicious policy for the encouragement and enforcement of their extension. A wise and large-minded Board of Agriculture, with compulsory powers in reserve, could have done much by inviting and stimulating the cordial co-operation of landowners, and the Act contemplated this method of procedure by making the first step in the process negotiation with the proprietors. Unfortunately the Board of Agriculture has failed to realise the practical advantages of harmonious co-operative action, and has proceeded in a spirit of bureaucratic arrogance. The practical difficulties and details to be considered were not realised by the political theorists who framed the Act, sufficient money was not provided, though the necessity for more was clearly pointed out at the time. The activities of the Land Court have hitherto been directed, not so much to the formation of new holdings, as to the cutting down of the income derived by landowners from those which they have voluntarily constituted or maintained.

The powers of the tribunal in regard to the fixing of rents relate to three classes of holdings — those in Highland counties in which so-called "Fair Rents" had already been fixed by the Crofters Commission; those all over Scotland, in which the Court proceeds on proof or on assumption that the buildings, or the major portion of them, had been constructed by the tenant or his predecessors in the same family; and those known as statutory small tenancies in which the buildings or the major portion of them have been erected or paid for by the landowner. It might have been anticipated that in the case of the second class coming under the purview of a tribunal for the first time considerable reductions might be made, but no one contemplated that at a time when agricultural prices have improved there could be much diminution of rents already judicially fixed; and no practical person who knew anything about the cost of equipping small holdings with buildings and the value in the open letting market of Lowland holdings of all sizes, could have imagined that any knowledgeable and fair-minded tribunal would make reductions in the case of statutory small tenancies at all approximating to those in the crofting parishes of the Highlands. But the Land Court have taken the same broad axe to all classes, and have wielded it with special vigour in the case of statutory small tenancies, against which a peculiar prejudice appears to be entertained. The President has exhibited an impatience of the statutory small tenant clause which resembles the wounded *amour propre* of an egotistical author when his manuscript is returned edited to any extent,

however small, by another hand.

The following figures are taken for the year 1912 (April to December) from the first official Report of the Land Court, and for the year 1913, and January 1914, from a collection carefully made of cases reported in the daily press. The columns are 1. number of cases dealt with, 2. rents reduced, 3. rents unaltered, and 4. rents raised:—

REVALUATIONS OF CROFTERS' RENTS.

	1.	2.	3.	4.
1912 .	99	87	10	2
1913-14 .	228	222	6	0

The rents dealt with in 1912 had been reduced by the Crofters Commission from £914 to £699, and were further cut down by the Land Court to £562—on an average by 19½ per cent. Those dealt with in 1913-14 were £1052, cut down to £833, or a reduction of over 20½ per cent.

FIRST "FAIR RENTS" OF SMALL LANDHOLDERS.

	1.	2.	3.	4.
1912 .	256	250	6	0
1913-14 .	541	511	24	6

The rental dealt with in 1912 was £2226, reduced to £1568, or an average of 29½ per cent. In one case a proprietor had voluntarily reduced first by 15 per cent, and again by 20, and subsequently, in the case of those who did not apply to the Crofters Commission, by 30 per cent. Yet on some of these tenants applying the Land Court further reduced by 26 per cent. In 1913-14 the rental dealt with was £4794, reduced to £3240, or slightly over 32 per cent. In four cases in Elgin the reduction was over 70 per cent, in thirty-five in Arran over 40.

"EQUITABLE RENTS" OF STATUTORY SMALL TENANTS.

	1.	2.	3.	4.
1912 .	89	87	2	0
1913-14 .	101	99	2	0

The rental dealt with in 1912 was £1581, and the reductions £402, or 25½ per cent; in 1913-14 the rental was £1946 and the reductions £522, or 27 per cent.

ARREARS OF RENT.

The Land Court have only power to deal with arrears in the case of tenants declared small landholders for the first time. They have, however, used these powers in the most high-handed fashion.

	Cases.	Arrears.	Cancelled.	Percentage.
1912	127	£1721	£771	44½
1913-14	——	1688	1218	72

In Arran, an island in which the tenants draw substantial incomes from summer lessees or lodgers, the whole arrears were wiped out. Upon all the arrears dealt with the proprietors had paid rates and taxes, and these in some districts are very heavy.

The total average reductions, so far as ascertainable, have been

	Per cent.
Crofter Revaluations . .	20
First Fair Rents . . .	29
Equitable Rents . . .	26½

The action in regard to

statutory small tenants has been specially scandalous. The clause dealing with tenancies in which the landlord has provided or paid for the whole or the bulk of the buildings was the principal element in a Parliamentary compromise, and the chief consideration in respect of which the Bill became an Act. A very large concession was made on behalf of Scottish landowners in accepting a statutory right of renewal of tenancy, which involved some outside authority to fix future rent, and the duty imposed upon the Land Court was that of acting as a single and impartial arbiter. The Legislature gave separate and explicit instructions as to the matters to be kept in view in fixing equitable rents for statutory small tenancies. It enacted that the Land Court

"shall so far as practicable act on their own knowledge and experience, taking into consideration all the circumstances of the case, including *the rent at which the holding has been let*, the proposed conditions of the new tenancy, the improvements made by the landlord and tenant respectively, and the then condition and value of such improvements, and *shall fix as the rent to be paid* by the tenant *the rent* which in their opinion would be an equitable rent for the holding *between the landlord and the tenant as a willing lessor and a willing lessee.*"

This provision clearly suggests that the case should be approached with a presumption in favour of the rent at which the holding had been actually let, that full interest should be allowed on the landlord's expenditure, and that, while the highest of competitive offers would not be conclusive, offers actually received, especially if more or less about the same figure, would be the most useful and cogent evidence of all of the equitable rent as between a willing lessor and a willing lessee.

In one case a holding of about 30 acres had been let in 1901 at £56. On expiry of the lease, after offer to sell to the tenant, it was advertised. Five offers were received, two of £60, two of £56, one being from the previous tenant. The proprietors—who were trustees—having accepted an offer of £60, the previous tenant applied to the Land Court, who decided in his favour and reduced the rent to £49. In a second case notice to quit had been given owing to deterioration. The acreage was 5¼, the rent £9, and the buildings, examined annually and kept in repair by the owner, worth at least £300. The Court, while expressing approval of their condition, reduced the rent to £5, 10s., an offer of £11 having been received, and the letting value of the neighbouring ground being from 25s. to 35s. per acre. In a third case an owner had let a holding of a little under 8 acres in 1898 to a stone-dyker, and renewed the houses at a cost of £230, accepting a rent of £9 rather than put out the tenant. The Court reduced this rent to

£7, 15s., or 3¼ per cent on the outlay on the buildings alone, 4 per cent being now the rate of interest on first-class heritable securities, and the landlord's local rates being 4 per cent. It is obvious that the Land Court does not intend to allow valuators under the Finance Act to have a monopoly of "minus values." In a fourth case the applicant held 17 acres arable and 113 pasture, at a rent of £40 fixed in 1907, being a reduction of 10s. 8d. on the previous lease. The owner had had a further net loss of £52, 4s. 10d. in connection with the transfer of sheep-stock from the old to the new tenant, who derived a considerable sum from trapping all the rabbits and letting the house in summer. Since 1871 the proprietor had expended £1123 on the farm, including £693 in rebuilding. Since the tenant's entry the owner's expenditure had been £136, 17s. 4d. The Court reduced the rent to £35.

These cases, which occurred in widely different districts of the country, appear to display a deliberate intention to disregard the meaning of the Act of Parliament, or at least to assume that its distinct directions to take certain things into account are overidden and rendered valueless by the words "in their opinion." In effect the Court is exercising not a judicial but an arbitrary discretion, and is undoubtedly doing its best to get behind the compromise, on the faith of which the Bill passed both Houses, and to withdraw the protection given to the equipping owner by Parliament. In the case of the statutory small tenant, as distinct from that of the Highland crofter, or crofterised Lowlander, the Court is really fixing not only the rent for the land, but the rent for the house provided by the proprietor, and interest or rent for the other buildings. How can such owner's outlay receive fair credit in the difference between 29 and 26½ per cent?

Under the Crofters Act the tribunal is bound in fixing the rent to take into consideration all the circumstances of the case, holding, and district, and particularly any permanent or unexhausted improvements executed by the crofter or his predecessors in the same family. It is obvious that the Legislature intended to draw a clear distinction between the "Fair Rent" in the one case and the "Equitable Rent" in the other, and that its intention was in the case of the equipping owner not to supersede ordinary market value, or to operate a practical transfer of slices of proprietorial right, but to provide the necessary ancillary arbitrating authority to adjust the question of rents on the same lines as prevailed under free contract on average well-managed estates. In both cases it seems to be clear from *dicta* which have been uttered, and from the action in the Arran cases, that the Court of set purpose refuses to consider "all the circumstances of the case, holding, and district,"

and sets its face against the consideration of more or less demand for land in the locality, and the pregnant evidence of actual offers where this is available.

The Land Court assigns no reasons and gives no explanation of the grounds on which it proceeds in fixing either "Fair" or "Equitable" rents. The so-called "Fair" or "Equitable" rent is in no ordinary or natural sense of the word either "fair" or "equitable." It is really simply an arbitrary figure, fixed by persons who have no exceptional qualifications, after inadequate inspection, sometimes at a most unsuitable season, without the local knowledge and experience necessary in the widely differing conditions throughout Scotland. The interpretation put upon the terms "Fair" and "Equitable" recalls the forcible comment of Lord Watson upon "the constructive principle" by which arbiters' awards need to be reduced on the grounds of "corruption, bribery, and falsehood," involving "that for the purpose of doing justice it is necessary to call a man 'corrupt' who is not corrupt but 'honest,' to call a man 'bribed' who never listened to an improper suggestion from any quarter, to call a man 'false' who never uttered a falsehood." So under this administration a rent is described as "Fair" which gives the owner something far below the "true avail" of his land, and "Equitable" which is much less than practical and prudent men, with a keen eye to their own interests, are ready to pay. No principle is indicated which would assist landlords in voluntarily readjusting rents and saving the expense and friction of litigation, and there is no redress from the *sic volo, sic jubeo* of a Court whose canon appears to be just that of the unjust steward of the parable: "'How much owest thou unto my lord?' 'An hundred measures of oil.' 'Take thy bill and sit down quickly and write fifty.' 'And how much owest thou?' 'An hundred measures of wheat.' 'Take thy bill and write four-score.'" If the real intent of the Act was to set up a system of wholesale political corruption, and the "Court's" true function to be that of agents in its exploitation in the interests of a faction, it must be admitted that the Scriptural comment also applies: "The children of this world are *in their generation* wiser than the children of Light."

The Act was universally understood to apply to proper small agricultural holdings, where the land was the principal subject, and not to cases where the house was the principal subject and a little accommodation land was given with it. Allotments under Acts of Parliament were expressly excepted. The Court is, however, in fact really fixing house rents where a little bit of land, not expressly described as garden ground, goes with the house. In one case a house was let with about an acre of ground

at £2, 15s., offered by the tenant two years before. The Court reduced to £1, stating that the house was not in habitable order. The estate then expended from £80 to £90 on the house, and it was inspected and approved in September 1912, but up to January 1914 no reconsidered rent had been intimated. In another case a man rented along with his house ¼ of an acre of potato ground (described by the Court as "arable"), and $\frac{1}{17}$ share of 58 acres of pasture ground for his cow. The house was obviously the chief subject, and the total rent £4, 4s. 6d. The Court declared the occupant a statutory small tenant, and reduced the rent to £3, 4s. Thus those owners who have been most kind to the occupants of houses in giving them accommodation land are penalised.

An excellent system existed in the north-eastern Lowlands by which landowners set aside for the use of villagers a number of acres of good arable land, known as "lotted lands" or "village lands," in fact, allotments, though not under the Allotment Acts. The average size was two acres; one man might hold more than one lot, and the tenant had to remove from the lot on giving up his house. The Land Court promptly swept these into the net, and on the terms of the Act their jurisdiction was sustained by the Court of Session. The result is not consistent with the general policy of Parliament as to allotments, and non-exemption of such voluntarily created allotments must have been an omission in the drafting of the Act, unless there was a deliberate intention to punish any voluntary action by a landlord, however beneficial. One result is to prejudicially affect the value of houses in villages, where the old tenant has thus been given a permanent right to the land which in ordinary course would have been relet with the house. Rents formerly readily paid have been reduced by about 30 per cent, though the former rent could easily have been obtained from other "willing lessees."

The sense of injustice has been aggravated by the methods of the Court. The reductions could only be justified if made after careful inspection when the crops are on the ground; and it is difficult to see how the Court, with the many cases before it, can be really proceeding upon practical inspection, when the judgment is not given for months afterwards. In the case of one small owner, where the rent was reduced by 18 per cent, the inspection was made "when it was so foggy that it was impossible to see more than a few yards in front of one." In one of lotted lands, two members of the Court inspected the land "on a boisterous day when snow was falling," and they "could not possibly arrive at any opinion as to its fertility." The same men deal with districts where the conditions are totally dissimilar, and the

President, whose proper function is the legal aspects of the Act, poses as a practical expert. There has latterly, with more publicity, been an improvement in the treatment of landlords' representatives, but the weight of evidence adduced for them receives insufficient consideration, while the complaint is repeated that loose hearsay and uncorroborated evidence by tenants obtains ready acceptance. The *dicta* vouchsafed from the tribunal have been startling. It has been announced that "bad farming was no disqualification for a landholder," and that "a Home Farm is not a Home Farm if it is mainly worked for a profit." The delay in issuing decisions is also complained of, and the rules of the Court bear hardly on proprietors. Inadequate time is allowed for lodging answers, which may involve much research, to meet unfounded allegations, and for intimating the only appeals permitted. The holding up of rents, and the practical invitation to accumulate arrears while applications are pending in the case of existing holdings, and the embargo imposed on letting where new holdings are in contemplation, while taxes, rates, and interest on bonds have to be promptly paid, cause serious inconvenience and loss. In regard to the constitution of new holdings, the Board of Agriculture appear to be pursuing a policy of disregarding the provision which expressly exempts Home Farms, and the Court appears to be as anxious to assist them in restricting or ignoring home farms as it is to rope in houses to which a little land is appurtenant.

Apart from the injustice to the landowners, there is the gravest apprehension as to the effect of the Act and its administration upon the maintenance of the permanent fertility of the land, and upon the morality of its cultivators. The landowner by his estate regulations was the guardian of the national interest in the sustained productivity of the soil. Under the new system he is warned off personal interest in and effective management of his own property. While the tenant is given a right to remain for ever, he is also given the right to throw up his holding at any time on a year's notice. It is made his interest to run down his holding in order to get a low rent fixed, in the sure and certain hope that the Court will never raise it again. In the case of new holdings created out of highly cultivated farms, there is great danger that after the novelty has worn off and the new holders have to meet one or two bad seasons, the accumulated fertility will be sucked out of the land and the holdings then thrown up. The only effective guarantee of the best being done for the land is the interest and control of the permanent owner, with the responsibilities as well as the superficial advantages of ownership, whether he be a landlord with tenants or a peasant pro-

prietor. But the paralysis of ownership, and the transference of a moiety of its attributes to one who can at any time shuffle off its responsibilities, is likely to prove disastrous.

The Small Landholders Act may either have been an honest, though doubtfully wise, measure for the sound settlement of agricultural relations, or one of a series of devices for getting the knife into the landed gentry and raiding the property of one class of the community. Its administration may render it either a useful measure for the reasonable supervision by the State and regulation of occasional abuse in the management of an important form of property, or an underhand instrument for disguised confiscation and theftuous transfer of large slices of money's worth from one set of men to another. Experience can alone show what is the true character and spirit in which it is being worked. It was said of the Milesians of old that "Maybe they were no fools, though they did the same things that fools are wont to do." So it may be affirmed of the authors and administrators of this Act, that maybe their action is neither confiscating nor oppressive, though its effect is to do the same sort of things as confiscators and tyrants have done from the beginning of time.

A PAGE OF HISTORY.

HAPPY is the country which has no history! If the old saying be true, England can lay little claim to happiness during the last six weeks. The unpleasant experience has been ours to be the puzzled witnesses of a plot, not yet wholly unravelled, and to mark the depths of shame and dishonour to which popular government and an assured majority inevitably drive Ministers of second-rate intelligence and no patriotism.

The origin of the plot has not yet been laid wholly bare, and if our Ministers have their way it will be hidden for ever from the body which they find it profitable to flatter as the sovereign people and very simple to deceive. But piece by piece admissions have been dragged from unwilling mouths, and we may conclude that the first step towards disaster was taken on March 11. On that day it was agreed (we are told) by the whole Cabinet that a battle squadron should be sent to Lamlash. As Mr Asquith ten days later repudiated all knowledge of this agreement, we have every right to regard it with scepticism. The same uncertainty obscures the purpose of the squadron's despatch. Mr Churchill's own explanation is inconsistent with itself. "It was decided," said he, "that a naval force comprising a battle squadron, with attendant vessels, should in the near future be stationed at Lamlash, which is a convenient and usual station for them to conduct their exercises from, and where they would be in proximity to the coasts of Ireland in case of serious disorders occurring." Here at once is a contradiction. If Lamlash is no more than "a convenient and usual station," the prospect of "serious disorders" need not have influenced the Admiralty one whit; and if the Cabinet were really in fear of disturbances, it is merely idle to chatter of convenience. At any rate the answer inspires as little confidence as the suggestion that the field guns were carried merely "to exercise the men at Lamlash if the weather was bad."

So the battle squadron was ordered to Lamlash on the 11th, with or without the knowledge of the Cabinet. Three days later the second step was taken. Mr Churchill went to Bradford and made a speech about Ulster. Mr Churchill has made many speeches about Ulster. He has approached the most difficult questions which the Ministers have to answer from every point of view. There is no opinion on the subject of Ulster that he has not held. He has flattered the Volunteers and he has threatened them. He has murmured platitudes about the Heptarchy and has freely acknowledged the delicacy of Ulster's position. A visit to Belfast, whence he

hardly escaped with a whole skin, should have taught him that the convictions of Northern Ireland were not lightly held. But Mr Churchill did not go to Bradford to flatter or to soothe. He went there that he might apply "ginger" to the forward movement, if we may use a favourite word of his own. His speech was full of blood and thunder. He assumed the familiar attitudes of Bombastes Furioso, and he must have driven poor little Mr George, who shrieked at Huddersfield a week later his threadbare platitudes about the Dukes, wild with envy. At Bradford there was no talk of Ulster fighting and being right. Mr Churchill had discovered that there were worse things than civil war, and that the time had come to put these grave matters to the proof. And surely the grave matters would have been put to the proof, if the plot had not been discovered, and had the plotters not lost their nerves.

The squadron had been ordered to Lamlash, the gauntlet had been thrown down at Bradford. Mr Redmond had declared to his triumphant followers that force would be met by force. Mr Devlin had given the men of Ulster a proof of the truculence which they might expect when Home Rule had procured a union of hearts. All was in readiness for a rapid advance. Cruisers were despatched to Belfast Lough. Arrangements were made to move troops to the North—Infantry, Cavalry, and Artillery. In Colonel Seely's own words: "One company of Infantry was instructed to move to Enniskillen, Omagh, Armagh, and Carrickfergus respectively. One battalion of Infantry was ordered to proceed, half to Dundalk and half to Newry respectively, and one battalion from Victoria Barracks, at Belfast, to Holywood Barracks, which is a barracks adjoining Belfast just outside." All seemed well, and all might have been well for those who were plotting Civil War, had not Sir Arthur Paget, on the 18th of March, acting under instructions from the War Office, placed alternatives of conduct before certain officers at the Curragh. What precisely Sir Arthur Paget was instructed to say we have not been told, and so sternly resolute is the Government to suppress the truth that it may be years before a clear, complete account of these tortuous proceedings be given. Here is a statement taken by one who heard it, and given by Mr Bonar Law, of what was said by the General Officer commanding the troops in Ireland to his commanding officers: "Sir Arthur Paget said that active operations were to be begun against Ulster, that he expected the country would be in a blaze by Saturday, that he had been in close communication with the War Office, and that he had the following instructions to convey to the officers from the War Office—'Officers domiciled in Ulster will be allowed to disappear, and would be reinstated in their positions, but

they must give their word of honour that they would not fight for Ulster. Officers who are not prepared to take active operations against Ulster, for conscientious or other scruples, were to send in their resignations and to be dismissed the army.'" Colonel Seely, without having heard this statement, took upon himself to repudiate it. "I can assure the right honourable gentleman," he said, "having seen Sir Arthur Paget this morning, that he denies absolutely that he said anything like it." Assuredly he protested too soon and too much. Mr Balfour's retort was crushing. "As the right honourable gentleman had not seen the statement at the time," said he, "I suppose he cannot have had an opportunity of cross-examining Sir Arthur Paget as to its accuracy." And indeed the statement given by Mr Bonar Law differs in no material point from that which, ten days later, was extracted from Mr M'Kenna, then for a brief moment leader of the House. Sir Arthur Paget, declared the Home Secretary, "informed the general officers of the permission given by the Secretary of State to all officers whose homes were in Ulster to withdraw temporarily from their regiments in the event of operations becoming necessary in Ulster, and requested the general officers to find out at once the number of officers who would withdraw on this ground. He was asked whether any officers who could not claim this exemption would be allowed to resign, and he replied that the result of any refusal to do their duty could only be dismissal." You do not thus interrogate officers, if you intend to make a purely precautionary movement. It is clear, then, that the Government contemplated an immediate attack upon Ulster. It is clear also that the Government was resolved to provoke Ulster to strike the first blow. An extract from a letter written by Sir Charles Ferguson to a young officer, a letter which has not been disowned, throws a strong light upon the situation: "Steps have been taken in Ulster," said Sir Charles, "so that any aggression must come from Ulsterites, and they will have to shed first blood." The comment does not err on the side of strength: "The idea of provoking Ulster is hellish!"

Such was the situation when Sir Arthur Paget put the alternatives to his commanding officers. General Gough and others did not hesitate for a moment. They refused to fight against Ulster, as by the terms of Sir Arthur Paget's question they were entitled to do, and were instantly dismissed. It was strenuously denied in the House of Commons that they were ever dismissed at all. But as a successor was appointed to General Gough, and as the word "dismissal" occurs even in Mr M'Kenna's version of Sir Arthur Paget's speech, it seems idle to dispute the question. What is not in dispute is that General Gough was summoned to London, that he was inter-

rogated by Colonel Seely, and that he returned to Dublin with a signed document in his pocket, assuring him that "he would not be called upon to order his brigade to take part in the coercion of Ulster in order to compel them to submit to a Home Rule Bill." The assurance was lucid enough, and might have been accepted as a definite protection, had it come from any other hands than the hands of His Majesty's Government.

Thus we are brought to the end of a week black for the country and the army. We know not which to wonder at the more, the folly or the wickedness of Mr Churchill and Colonel Seely. And then for the first time Mr Asquith appears to have intervened in what had now become an acute crisis. The truth had been slowly emerging; the country was in a blaze of a different kind from that foreseen by Sir Arthur Paget; and the Prime Minister, perhaps, like the public, was beginning to discover the existence of a plot. At any rate, at a late hour on Sunday, March 22, he authorised 'The Times' to make the famous statement on his behalf. The movements of troops in Ireland, he asserted, were "purely of a precautionary character." Forgetting Lamlash and the battle squadron—if, indeed, he had ever heard of them—he declared that "the so-called naval movements consisted in the use of two small cruisers to convey a detachment of troops to Carrickfergus, without the necessity of marching them through the streets of Belfast." Furthermore, he asseverated that warrants were not out for the arrest of the Ulster leaders, and that the rumour had never had the slightest foundation in fact. Still more boldly committing himself, he insisted that the Government did not contemplate "instituting a general inquisition into the intentions of officers in the event of their being asked to take up arms against Ulster"; and this for the best of reasons, "that the employment of troops against Ulster is a contingency which the Government hope may never arise."

Thus Mr Asquith; and those who like to exercise their ingenuity in composing differences, may see how far they can reconcile the Prime Minister's statements with the admitted facts of the case. It is not the common practice of Ministers to confide their thoughts late on Sunday evening to the editor of 'The Times,' and we may assume that Mr Asquith recognised the delicacy of the situation. What is really remarkable in his departure from the habits of Governments is the scanty information which he either possessed or desired to convey. The probability is that he was kept deliberately in the dark. It cannot be supposed, for instance, that he endorsed all the wild and whirling words which the First Lord of the Admiralty permitted himself to use at Bradford. Lamlash was evidently a

sealed book to him; and it is difficult to understand why he should deny "an inquisition into the intentions of officers," since he had obviously been told of what took place at the Curragh. Perhaps, by the familiar process of Jesuitry, he hoped to ride off on the word "general," or to find in a past tense an easy way of escape. However, his statement was made, and did nothing whatever to allay the general feeling of uneasiness which had crept over the country.

The scene now shifted from Ireland and the War Office to the House of Commons, and there began such an exhibition of prevarication as has never been equalled in that Assembly. If the Tories were resolute to uncover the truth, the Radicals were obdurate to conceal it. Unhappily for them, they did not take the sound advice once given by Lord Melbourne to the members of his Cabinet—that they should agree upon the particular lie they were resolved to tell. With a great appearance of frankness Colonel Seely presented a White Paper to the House, which ingeniously suppressed precisely what the House wished and had a right to know. For instance, you will search the White Paper in vain for the instructions given by the War Office to Sir Arthur Paget. Not a word is said of Sir Arthur's visit to London; not a syllable of Sir Arthur's speech to his officers. Almost the only pertinent documents in the Paper are the letters from General Gough, and the famous guarantee which was given to him, signed by Colonel Seely, Sir John French, and Sir Spencer Ewart. That this guarantee should have been given direct to a subordinate commander accords ill with what should be the practice of the War Office, and is proof sufficient that Colonel Seely, like all the Ministers, believed himself to be beyond the reach of precedent.

But no sooner was the White Paper printed than the guarantee given to General Gough excited the Labour Party and the extreme Radicals to a blind fury of anger. That a soldier, being presented with alternatives, should choose that which chimed with his own honour and dignity, seemed an open affront to the chosen of the people. For them a soldier is a mere instrument to register the popular will, the patient, unthinking servant of the odd man. And so with one accord the Ministers began to renounce responsibility for Colonel Seely's guarantee. How that document came to be signed is not yet clear, and the torrent of contradictory explanations hastily given has swept away all chance of immediate understanding. What emerges from the mist is something as follows: the document, giving General Gough the guarantee which he asked, was drafted by the Adjutant-General and approved by Colonel Seely; it was neither seen nor accepted by the Cabinet as a whole; and Colonel Seely, admitting that

he was gravely blameworthy in supplementing the agreed decision of the Cabinet with paragraphs of his own, placed his resignation in the hands of the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister at that moment refused to accept it. As Mr Bonar Law said, Colonel Seely was thrown to the wolves, with a bargain on the part of the wolves that they would not eat him.

It was said that in supplementing the agreed decision of the Cabinet, Colonel Seely acted without accomplices. This statement, too, must be qualified. The guilty document was shown at least to Lord Morley, and read by him, though at first it was not certain what precise part he played in the episode. Mr Churchill had no doubts. "When Lord Morley came into the room," said Mr Churchill in his most defiant manner, "the Secretary of State was opening for the first time the box in which the letter of General Gough was contained. . . . Lord Morley asked my right hon. friend what was actually to be stated in the other House consequent on the Cabinet decision. He never revised or examined these paragraphs, or expressed any criticism upon them. . . . Lord Morley thought it his duty, though he was only remotely and indirectly brought into contact with the event, to say that he takes full responsibility for it." Unfortunately Lord Morley does not agree with Mr Churchill. His own account differs absolutely from that given by his colleague. "The Secretary of State," said Lord Morley, "drafted the form of words — in consultation, as he mentions, with myself — which he considered stated clearly the policy of the Government and the military authorities." Nor did he, as Mr Churchill asserts, accept the smallest responsibility for what was partly his own doing. He is still a member of his Majesty's Government, while Colonel Seely is reviling the Tory Press and lamenting the loss of £5000 a-year, a private member before his constituents at Ilkeston.

Colonel Seely, then, was not immediately thrown to the wolves. His guarantee was merely repudiated by the Prime Minister, and in the face of this repudiation he thought it no disgrace to remain at the War Office. Is it not reassuring for our national honour that the undertaking of one Minister can be made, in a phrase delivered by another, "non-operative"? But Mr Asquith, in thus getting rid of his colleague's solemn promise and keeping his colleague, forgot Sir John French and Sir Spencer Ewart. These plain soldiers did not understand how a guarantee given and accepted could become suddenly of no effect. They obviously cherish old-fashioned views of a pledged word. Colonel Seely does not appreciate their delicacy. "Sir John French and the Adjutant-General," he told his constituents, "found for some curious and inverted reason they must resign." The reason

naturally seemed "ourious and inverted" to our Radicals, for it is no more than a sense of honour. But their resignation forced Colonel Seely's hand,—even he, too, was then compelled to go; and we may congratulate ourselves that Lord Morley, made of sterner stuff, still directs his party's campaign in the House of Lords.

But, as we have said, the left wing had already broken out into open revolt. That any one, save an honest working man, should be burdened with a conscience was a plain outrage. The extremists also saw, or thought they saw, an election cry which would serve them as well as the lie about Chinese labour. Mr Churchill, that Catiline in pinchbeck, rose, as he thought superbly, to the occasion. In one of the most disgraceful speeches ever made in the House of Commons he used these words: "When everything has been said to reduce these things to their proper proportions, the fact remains that the great issue has been raised of the Army *versus* Parliament. We are content to let that issue, in so far as it has been raised, move steadily forward to its ultimate conclusion. Another issue has been broken in upon this—the Army *versus* the People." They are light words, lightly spoken, and they strike at the safety, at the very existence of the Empire. The man who thinks them and says them is a parricide—no more and no less. They have no justification, in fact, and if they had been doubly true it would have been a blow struck at the country to speak them. There can be no opposition between the Army and the People. Take away the Army and the People speedily will cease to exist. There has been no insubordination in the Army, no reluctance to obey lawful orders. Whatever General Gough and his comrades said they were invited to say by a Radical Minister. A question asked and an answer given in the House of Lords will justify the Army completely against any aspersions cast upon it:

Lord Selborne. Have any officers, in any rank, in any command, regiment, or corps in Ireland refused to obey any order received from a superior officer; and if so, what is the name of that officer, and what is the order which he received?

Lord Morley. The answer to this important question is that there has been no disobedience to orders in connection with recent events by any officer or man in Ireland. . . . The conduct of the troops generally has been exemplary.

Lord Morley's answer may presently be repudiated by his colleagues; it may be pronounced by the pleasant euphemism of the day "non-operative." At present it is uncontradicted, and should protect the Army against the aspersions of Mr Winston Churchill and his friends.

However, Mr Churchill's intervention has not been without advantage to England. Even his colleagues have already denounced the "issue" which he so proudly raised. Not that

that matters vastly, since the Prime Minister has ceased to exact of his Cabinet the obedience which is the unbroken tradition of the Army. But Mr Churchill does not stand where he did before he proved this signal lack of judgment. There have long been disquieting rumours that he wished to return to the Tory Party. Articles have been written extolling his patriotism and his moderation. He was all for quiet counsels, we were told not long since, and if he were not received back into the fold which once sheltered him he would start a new party of his own. Happily the speech delivered on March 25 has put us out of danger. Mr Churchill will never speak again on a Tory platform. If he shifts his party it will be to try conclusions with Mr Ramsay Macdonald for the leadership of the group which pretends to fight under the banner of Labour.

Meanwhile Lord Haldane, not to be behind his fellows, was showing what could be done by a little judicious correction to change the whole purport of a guilty speech. On March 24 he had spoken these words in the House of Lords: "No orders were issued, no orders are likely to be issued, and no orders will be issued for the coercion of Ulster." Colonel Seely's guarantee had not then been repudiated. Mr Churchill's inflammatory speech had not been made. But when Lord Haldane came to correct the proofs of his speech the situation was changed, and he thought it not derogatory to the dignity of the high office that he holds to slip in the word "immediate," and thus transform the whole meaning of his utterance. That the Lord Chancellor of England, the Keeper of the King's conscience, should be guilty of this meanness is hardly credible; yet in the welter of recent prevarications it left Lord Haldane wholly unabashed, and assuredly was generally approved by his accommodating colleagues.

With Mr Asquith's appointment of himself to the War Office, the recent crisis was temporarily suspended. And in the lull no one who looks backwards upon it dispassionately, from Mr Asquith's uncontested bye-election to the speech delivered at Bradford by Mr Churchill, can have any doubt that events followed one another in a logical sequence. None of the Ministers emerge from the ordeal with a rag of credit. Upon Mr Asquith, who appears to smile at insubordination, the heaviest responsibility falls. If he is unable to control his team, then he should resign and leave the work to firmer hands. Of the rest, Mr Churchill and Colonel Seely come the worst off, and it would have been better if the late Secretary of State for War had kept a discreet silence after resignation. The tragic trilogy has been followed as usual by a satiric drama. In other words, Colonel Seely has taken his constituents into his confidence. He boldly refused to stand in a white sheet. Why, indeed, should he thus

enwrap himself? After the Marconi scandals and the Ulster plot, we can imagine no indiscretion which should suggest the penalty of a white sheet to the most sensitive of Radicals. It was all the fault of the Tory Press, he said. "The Conservative newspapers went mad." Can the Conservative newspapers, then, mad or sane, achieve so great marvels as to drive a Cabinet Minister and two distinguished soldiers into resignation, persuade a Lord Chancellor to tinker a speech, and compel Mr Asquith to double the parts of First Lord of the Treasury and Minister for War? Surely it is taking the Press a little too seriously. No, that explanation will not serve even in Ilkeston. And Mr Seely was on surer ground when he declared that "the only difference was he was £5000 a-year the poorer." There he touches the real motive-power of modern politics, and if some of his colleagues would consent also to be £5000 a-year poorer, the public life of England would be better entitled to respect than it is to-day.

One thing is plain from all the rhetoric of the past few weeks, and that is the danger in which the Army stands. The Army of Great Britain is a small, if perfect, instrument, properly designed for use against the enemies of the country. If we understand Mr Asquith, he intends presently to employ the Army, not to repel a foreign foe, but to enforce the decrees of Mr Redmond. We do not envy the conscience of him who thus assumes the responsibility of civil war. There are reasons—such as threatened liberty or religious persecution—which justify men in taking up arms against their fellows. Mr Asquith can urge no such excuse for the employment of the British Army against the Ulster Volunteers. The Home Rule Bill has been passed through the House of Commons despite an English majority. It has never been submitted to the approval of the electors. It will be passed, if it be passed, in compliance with a pledge secretly given to Mr Redmond and the Irish Nationalists. If the Ulster Volunteers refuse to accept its provisions, as they will, then the British Army is to be sent to fight the battle of the men who have insulted that Army for years, who have cheered when it has suffered defeat, who have done their best by the dissemination of falsehoods to prevent their brothers and sons from serving in its ranks. We say that no body of men should be asked to perform so degrading a task. With England at war, it is the duty of all soldiers to obey the orders given without question or delay. In civil strife another rule has always prevailed—a rule openly recognised by Colonel Seely, when he put before General Gough and the rest the choice of two alternatives. In the American War permission was freely given to officers to remain at home, if they objected to fight against the revolting Colonists. And there is a nearer intimacy between Ulster and the Army of to-day than existed in the eighteenth century between the

Army and the Colonists. In every civil war the Army must be divided against itself. You cannot ask the best-disciplined soldier to shoot his brother; and yet Mr Asquith, spurred on by bellicose Quakers, truculent peace-at-any-price men, and bloodthirsty dissenters, is travelling fast down the incline of power to the ruin of the Empire and the disruption of the British Army.

In all the tangle of dangerous absurdities in which the Parliament Act, that inevitable prelude of civil war, has involved us, none is more grotesque than the fury of the peace-mongers. The men who, if England were fighting for her life or her honour against foreign aggression, would clamour for peace, would bring comfort to the enemy, and would rejoice at the failure of British arms, are screaming aloud for the army to fight Mr Redmond's battle in Ulster. How shall we explain the incongruity except by confessing that political rancour is stronger than principle, stronger than honour, stronger than patriotism. To defend England from attack is an unrighteous thing, unworthy the peaceful Quaker and the zealous Nonconformist. To shoot Ulstermen for daring to disagree with the Quaker and the Nonconformist is so lofty a duty that it sanctifies even war itself!

The late crisis has brought upon Great Britain an indelible shame. It has poisoned the wells of truth. Never again can we accept any statement upon the bare word of a Radical Minister. Reports may be "corrected," the House of Lords may flatly contradict the House of Commons, facts may be sternly suppressed, guarantees may be rendered inoperative. How great an injury this contempt of truth will inflict upon the country cannot be estimated. Politicians still appear to the people, which they flatter, persons of some worth. Why then, if its leaders scruple not to tell falsehoods, should the people take the trouble to say that which is? History, no doubt, will put the miscreants in the right place. It will nail them upon an immemorial barn-door as a warning to others. Meanwhile, to adopt Colonel Seely's happy phrase, they are £5000 a-year the richer, and doubtless they think that all is well. The only comfort left us is to reflect that recovery is still possible. What is has been, and we are reminded by late events of an admirable saying of Dr Johnson. "Pulteney," said the Lexicographer, "was as paltry a fellow as could be. He was a Whig who pretended to be honest; and you know it is ridiculous for a Whig to pretend to be honest. He cannot hold out." That is what has come to our Radicals of to-day, the lineal descendants of Pulteney and the Whigs. They have pretended, some of them very shamefacedly, to be honest, and they couldn't hold out.

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